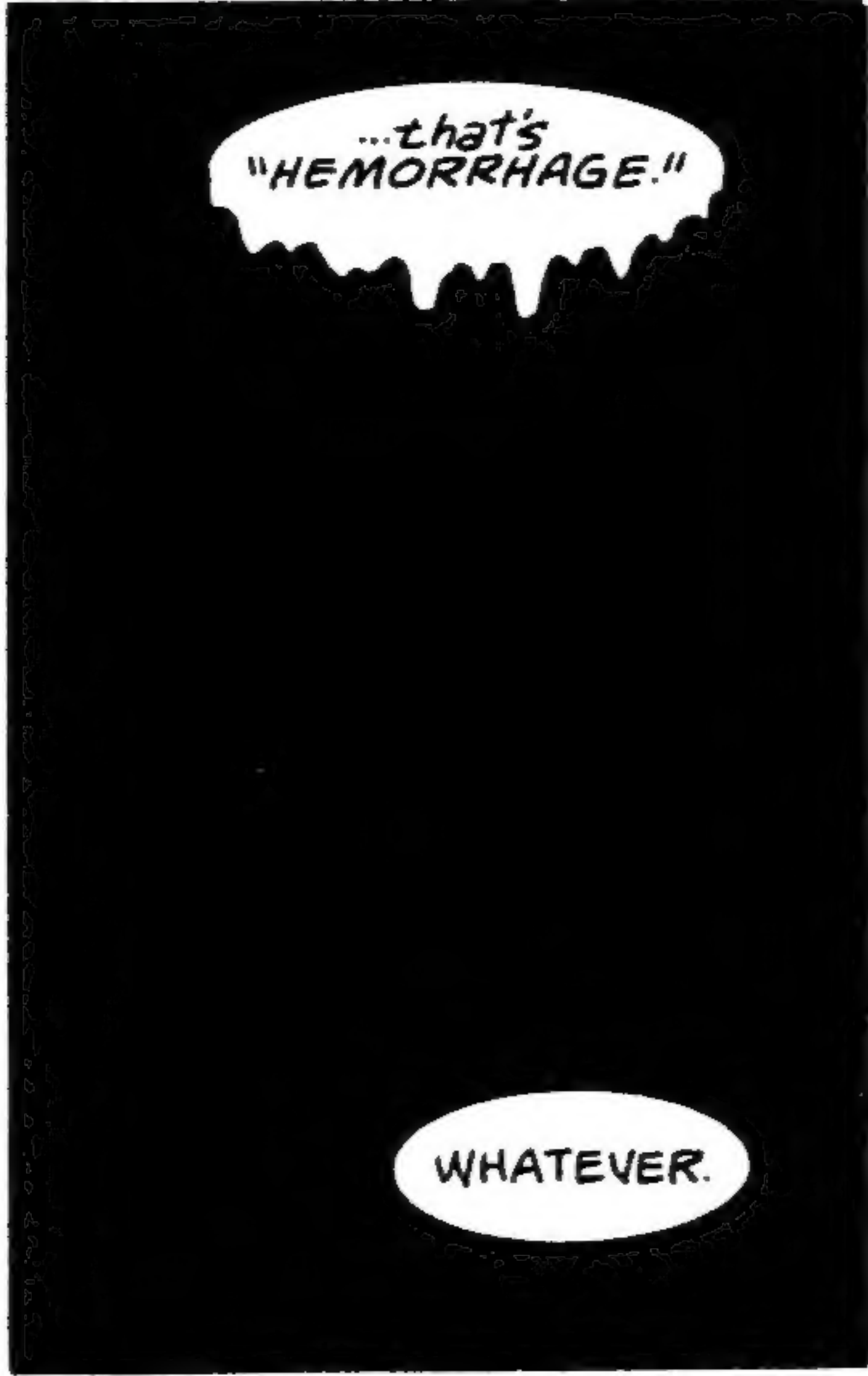
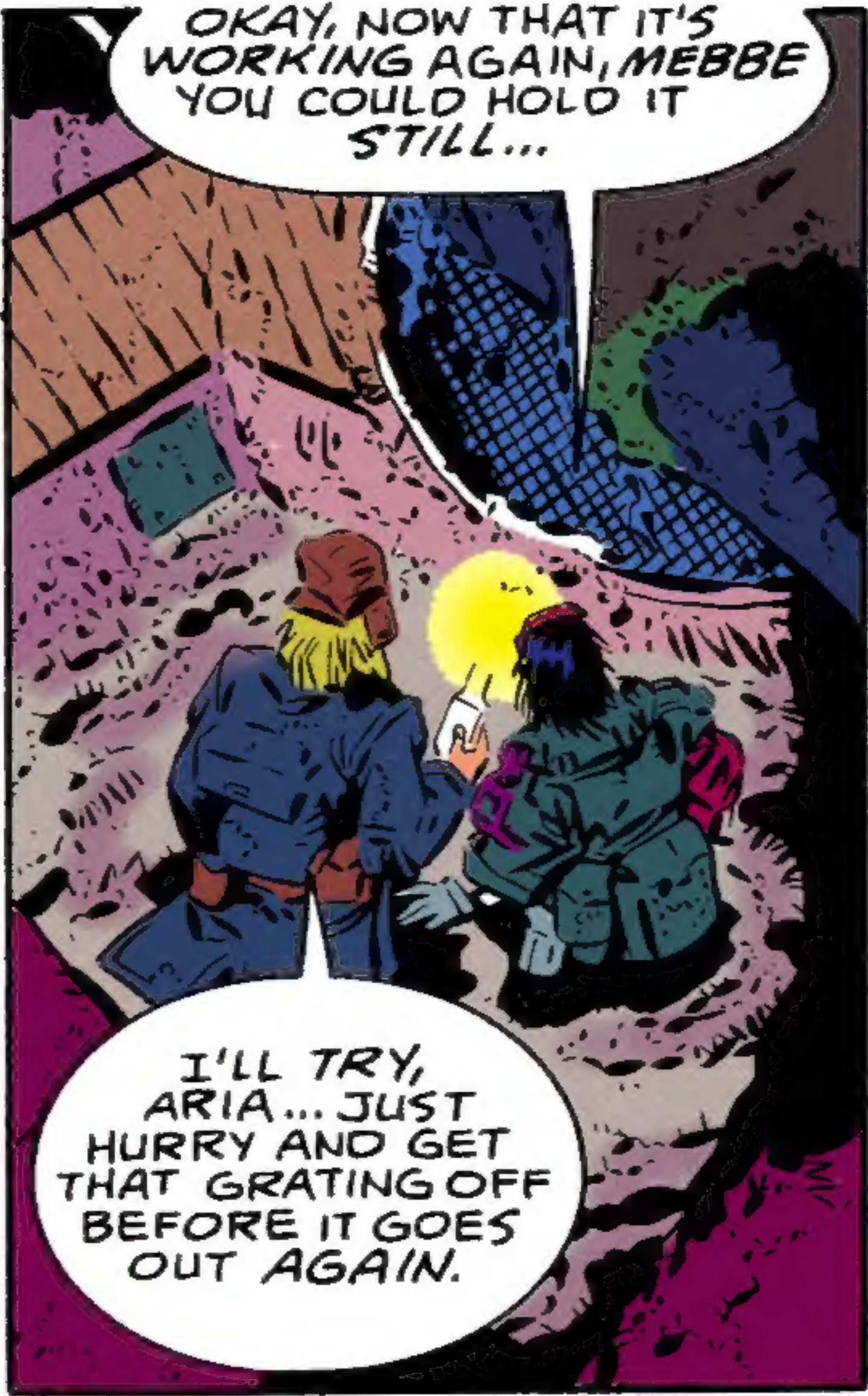


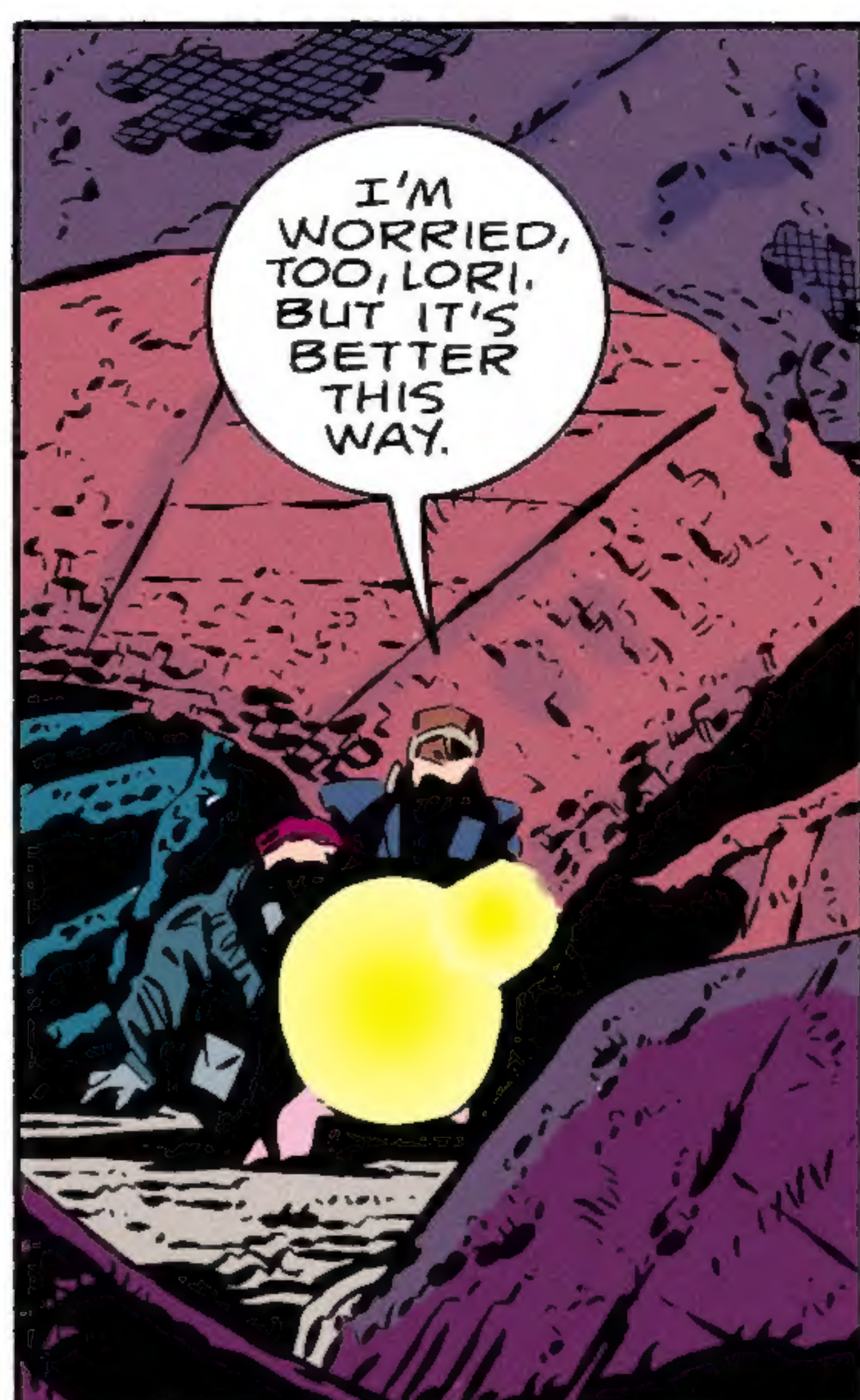

LEGION OF
SUPER-HEROES
21
AUG 91

LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES®

...the quiet darkness.

AL GORDON KEITH GIFFEN TOM & MARY BIERBAUM







...I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT I CAN'T STAND IT DOWN HERE ANY-MORE!



WELL, GEE, WHO LED US DOWN HERE?



I DON'T SEE YOU LEADING THE WAY, LITTLE MISS "WATER THE PL--" OH, I THINK I GOT IT...



EAUGH!

I GOT SOME IN MY MOUTH. EUUUU! OH, ICK!



...IT'S...

...ONLY...

...WATER...

YOU HOPE!



OH, C'MON! LET'S GET OUTTA HERE. HONESTLY, LORI, I DON'T KNOW WHY I BROUGHT YOU ALONG.



GIVE ME YOUR HAND. I'LL HELP... UNGH!

BUT YOU'RE GETTING ME ALL WET!

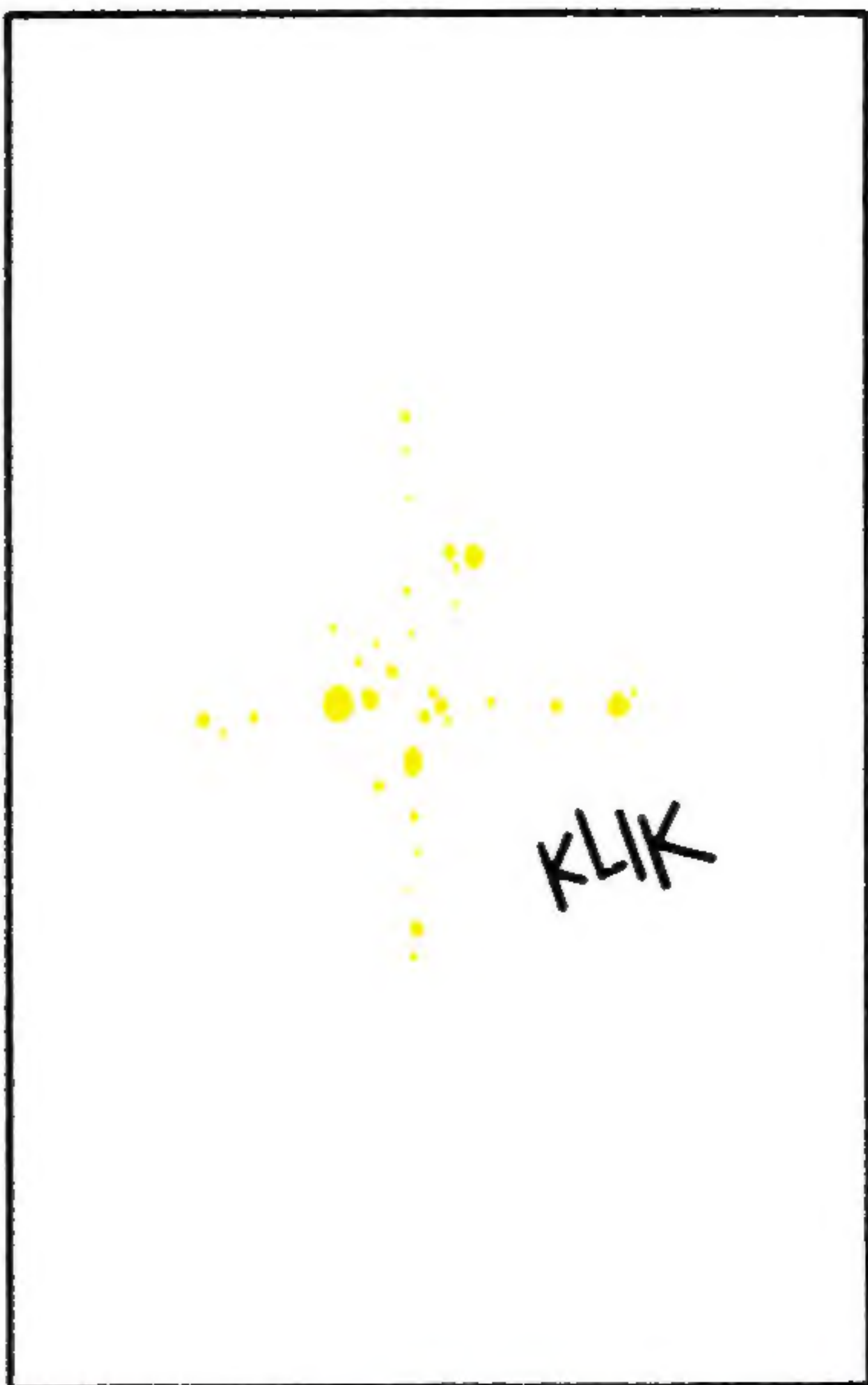


YOU ARE ALL WET.

rustle

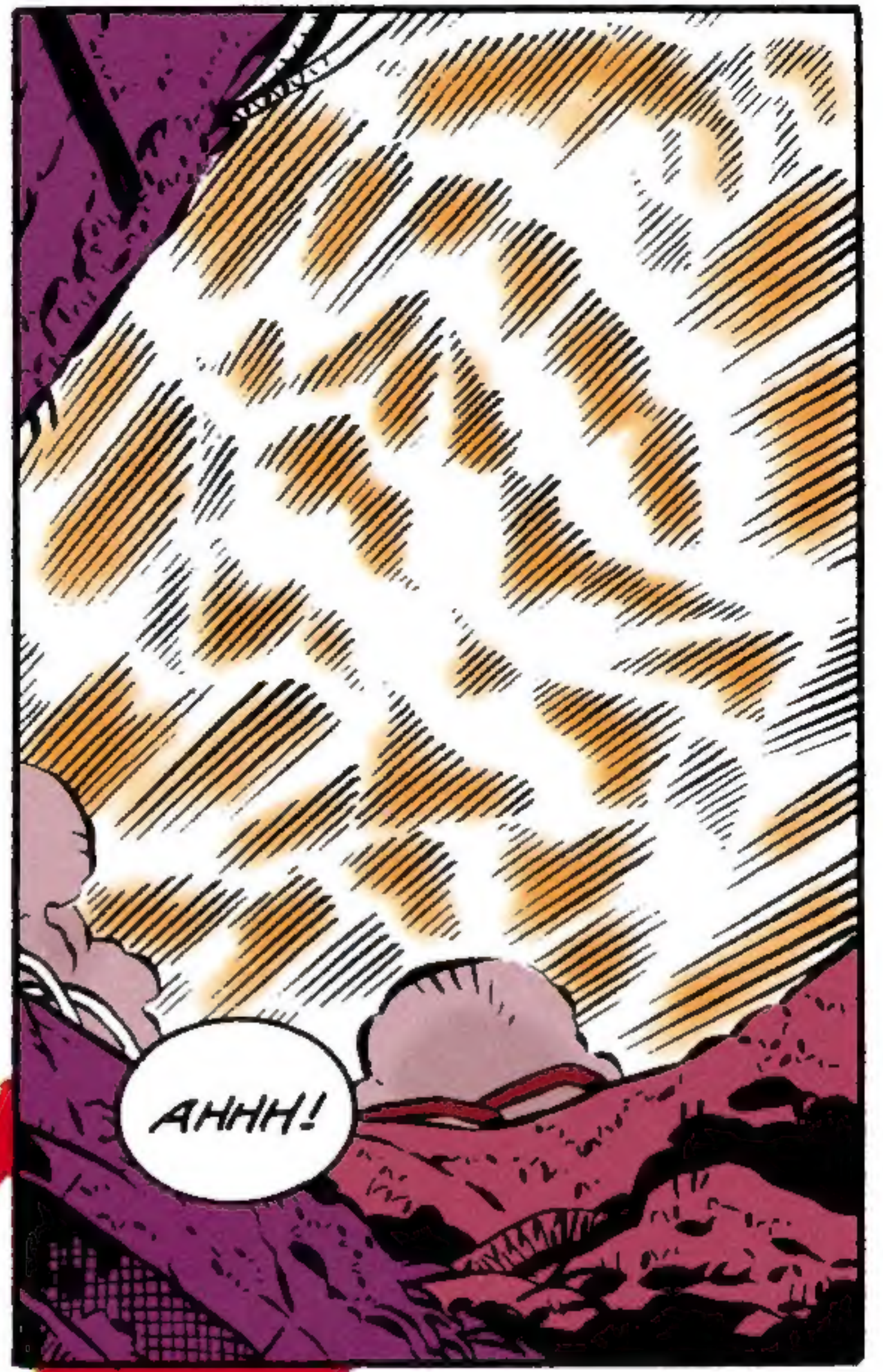
DID YOU HEAR SOMETHING, ARIA?

YEAH... IT'S PROBABLY A RAT.













ARIA,
COME
BACK
HERE
!!!

IT'S
ALL RIGHT,
LORI, HE'S
OKAY NOW.

Y'KNOW,
I BETCHA
HE'S SOME-
BODY'S PET.



PET? IF YOU
THINK I'M GONNA
STAND HERE
WHILE THAT
"PET" EATS
YOU...

WHAT
AM I GONNA
TELL YOUR
DAD...



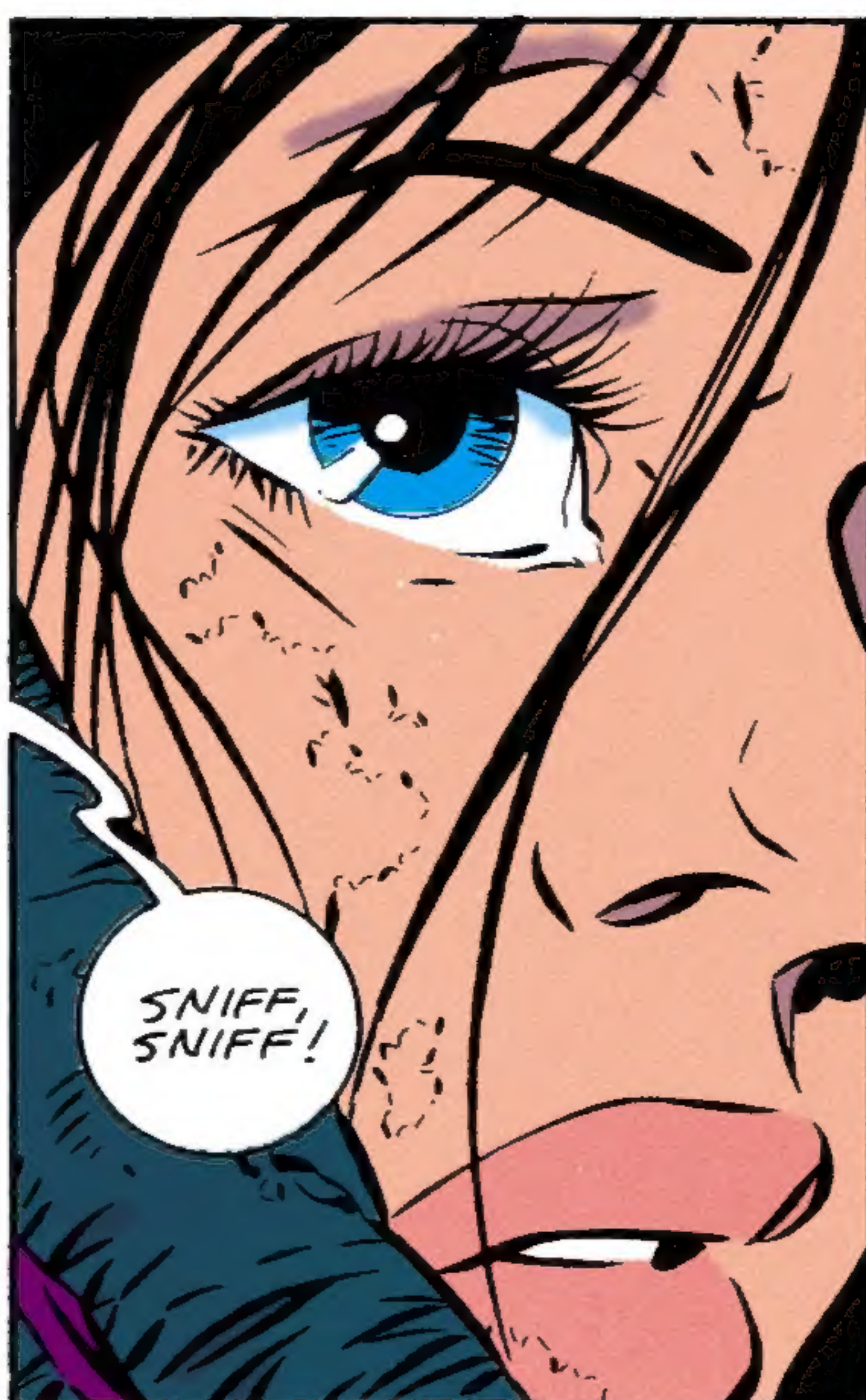
YOU ARE SUCH
AN OLD HEN,
LORI. OH, MY...
LOOK AT
ALL THIS
BLOOD.



EASY, BOY... I
WON'T HURT YOU.

HERE,
LET'S HAVE
A LOOK
AT THAT
ARM.

THAT'S A GOOD BOY... YOU
WON'T EAT ME, WILL YOU?



SNIFF,
SNIFF!



RIPPP
PP!

YEEK!
THAT'S MY
BACKPACK!



OH,
NO...
ARIA...

HEY,
DON'T
BREAK
THAT... I
NEED IT.



MUNNCH
MUNNCH
SLURRP
MUNNCH

UH,
LORI...



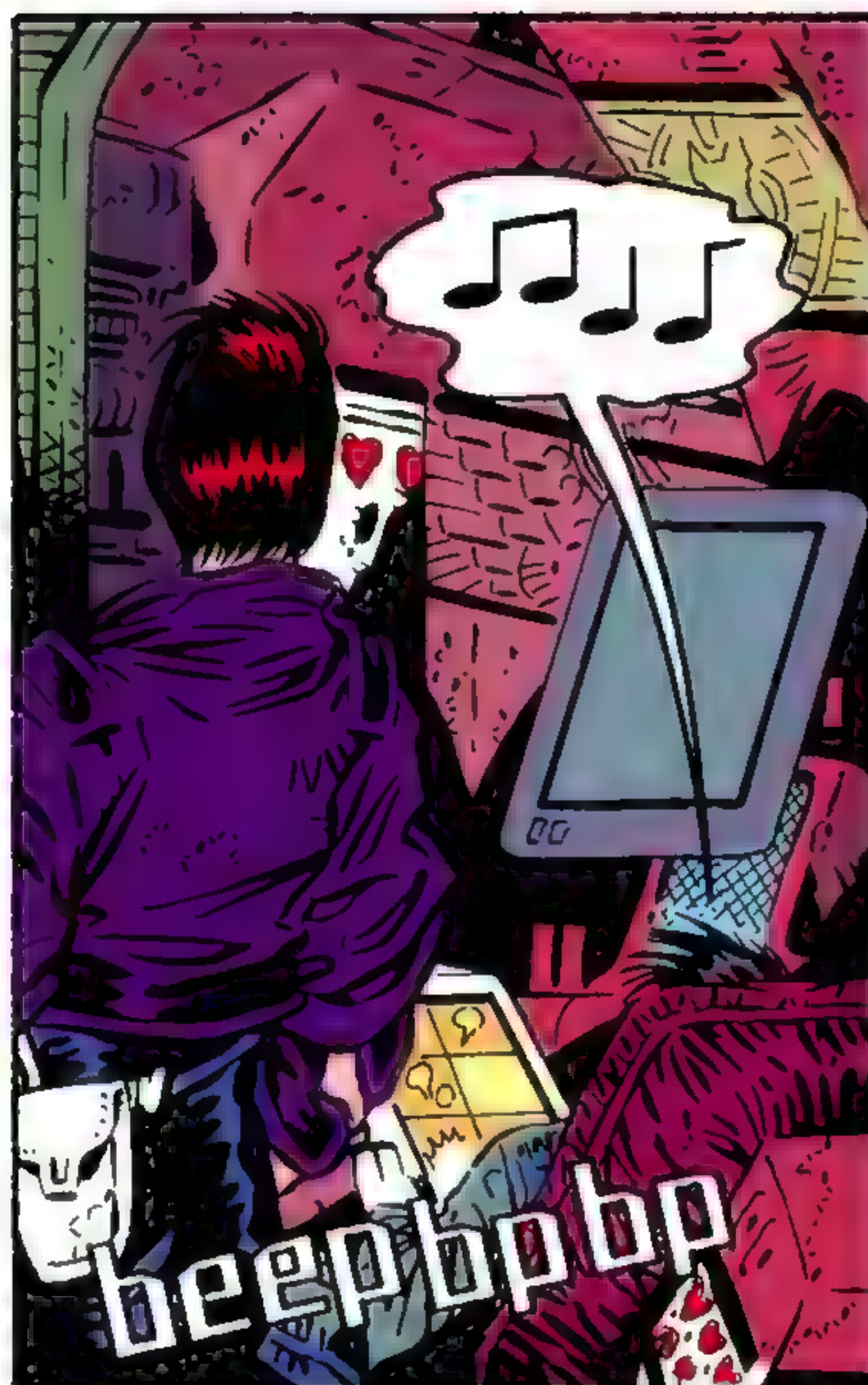
I
THINK HE'S
HUNGRY.

WHY
DOESN'T
THAT MAKE ME
FEEL ANY
BETTER?



LEGION HEADQUARTERS,
TALUS...

beepbbbp



beepbbbp



DON'T BOTHER
ACTUALLY "MOVING,"
JO... I'LL
GET IT!

I'D HATE
TO SEE SOME
BLOOD
ACTUALLY
CIRCULATING
IN THAT
SKINNY
BUTT OF
YOURS.

beepbbbp



≡SIGH≡ LEGION
HEADQUARTERS... OH,
IT'S ONLY YOU.

HELLO, CELESTE
...I... UH... I HAVE
SOME BAD
NEWS.



YOU
WHAT
?!



...I SAID
I'VE LOST
FURBALL.

OH, AND
I SUPPOSE
YOU WANT ME
TO BREAK
THIS TO
KONO.

CELESTE,
PLEASE...
I'M IN A POL-
STATION AT BRINKE
POINT ON ZUUN.
THIS WHOLE SYSTEM
IS UNDER... ZZZ...
MARTIAL LAW... ZZZ...



BRAINY,
YOUR TRANS-
MISSION'S
BREAKING
UP...

HEY! SOME
JOKER PUT GLUE
ON THIS PILLOW...

I KNOW... I
WAS... ZZZ... BRINGING
FURBALL HERE FOR
SOME IMPORTANT
ENDOCRINE
TESTS... ZZZ...



... AND I NOTICED SOME
UNUSUAL METAPHOROUS
READINGS JUST BEFORE
WE WERE TAKEN INTO
CUSTODY...

ZZZ...
CUSTODY?...
OLD
PARKING
TICKETS?...
ZZZ...

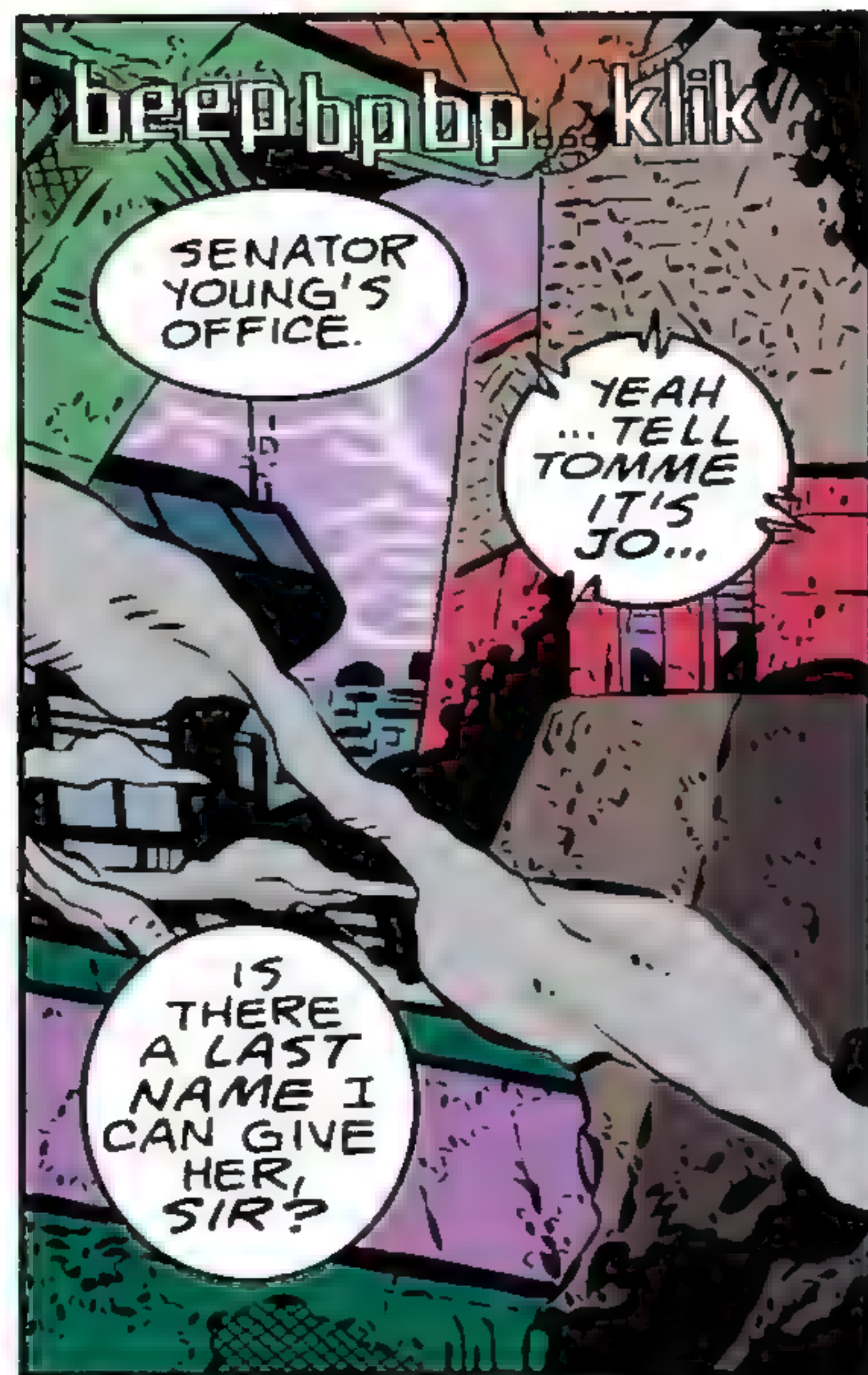
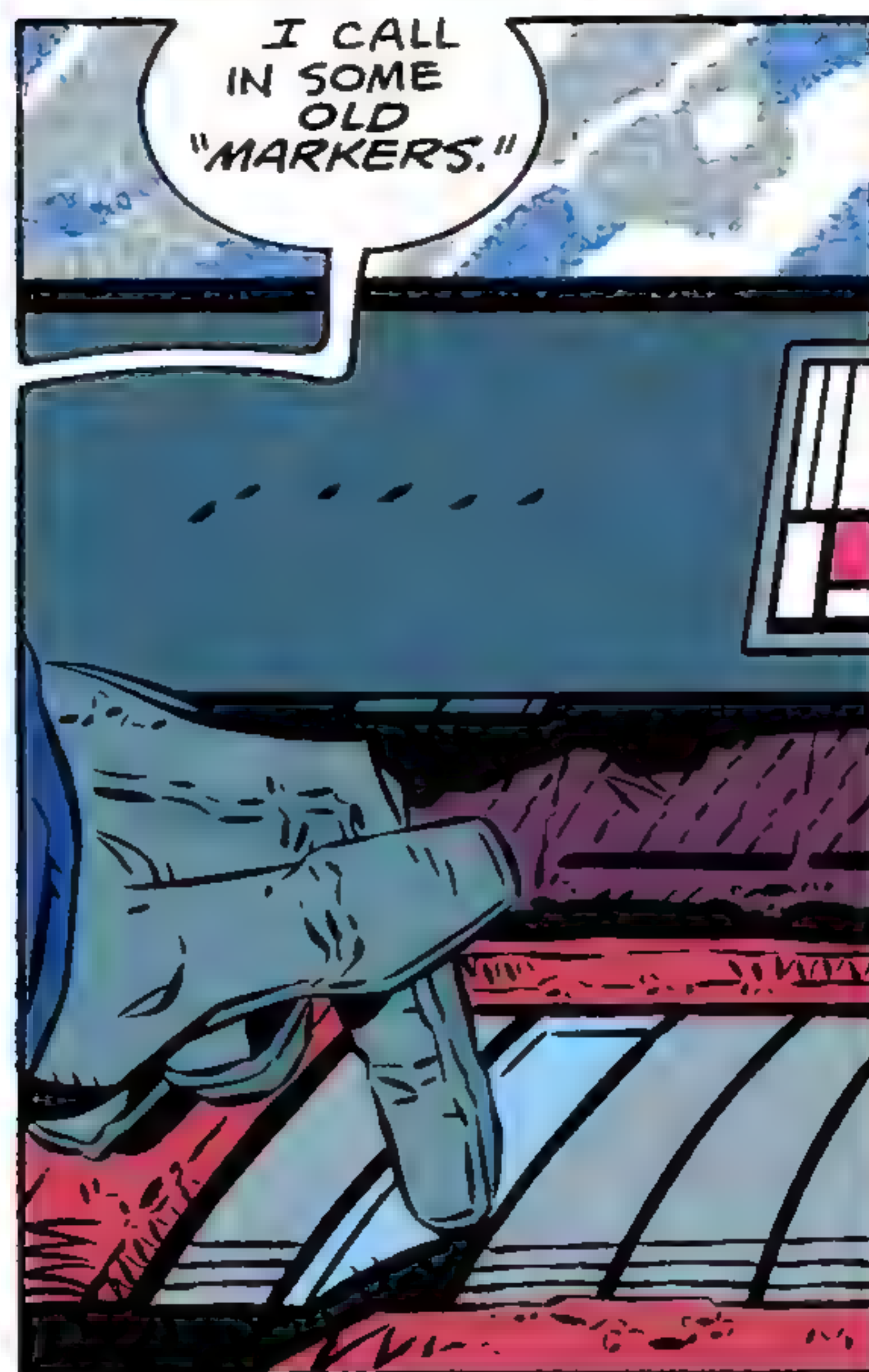
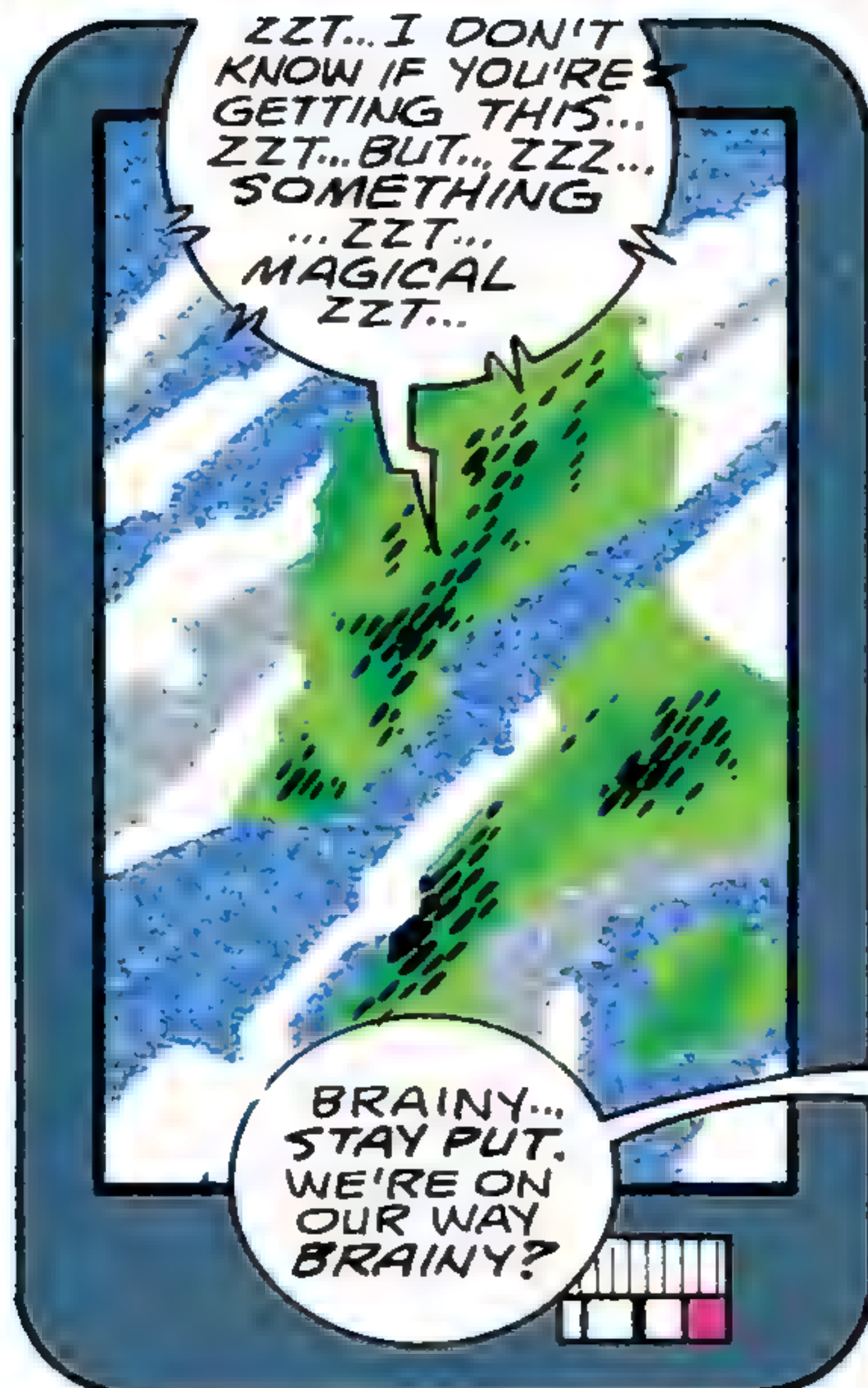
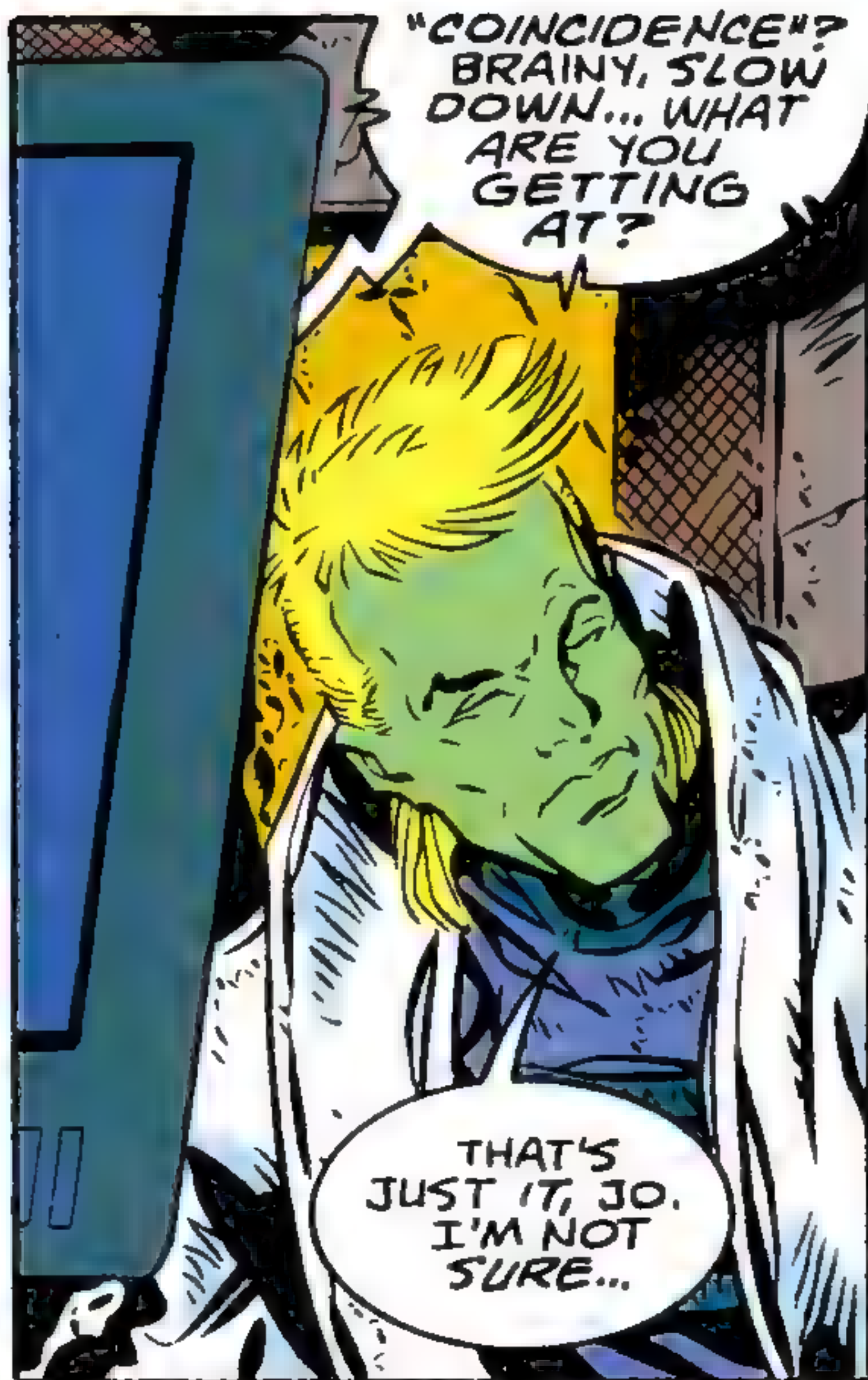
CELESTE, THIS
IS VERY IMPORTANT.
I DON'T HAVE MUCH
TIME... THEY TRIED
TO SEDATE FURBALL AND
HE WOULDN'T GO FOR IT.

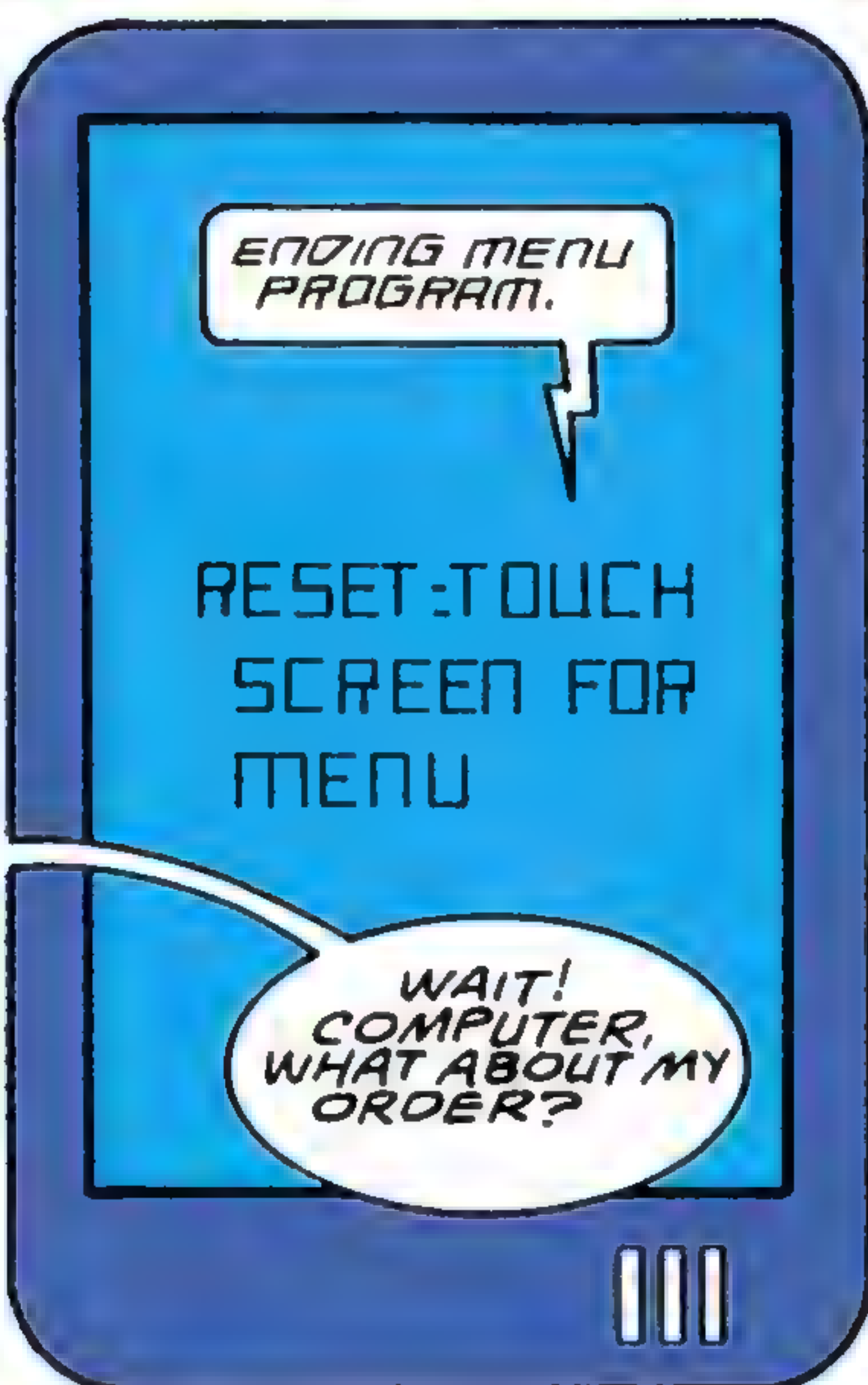
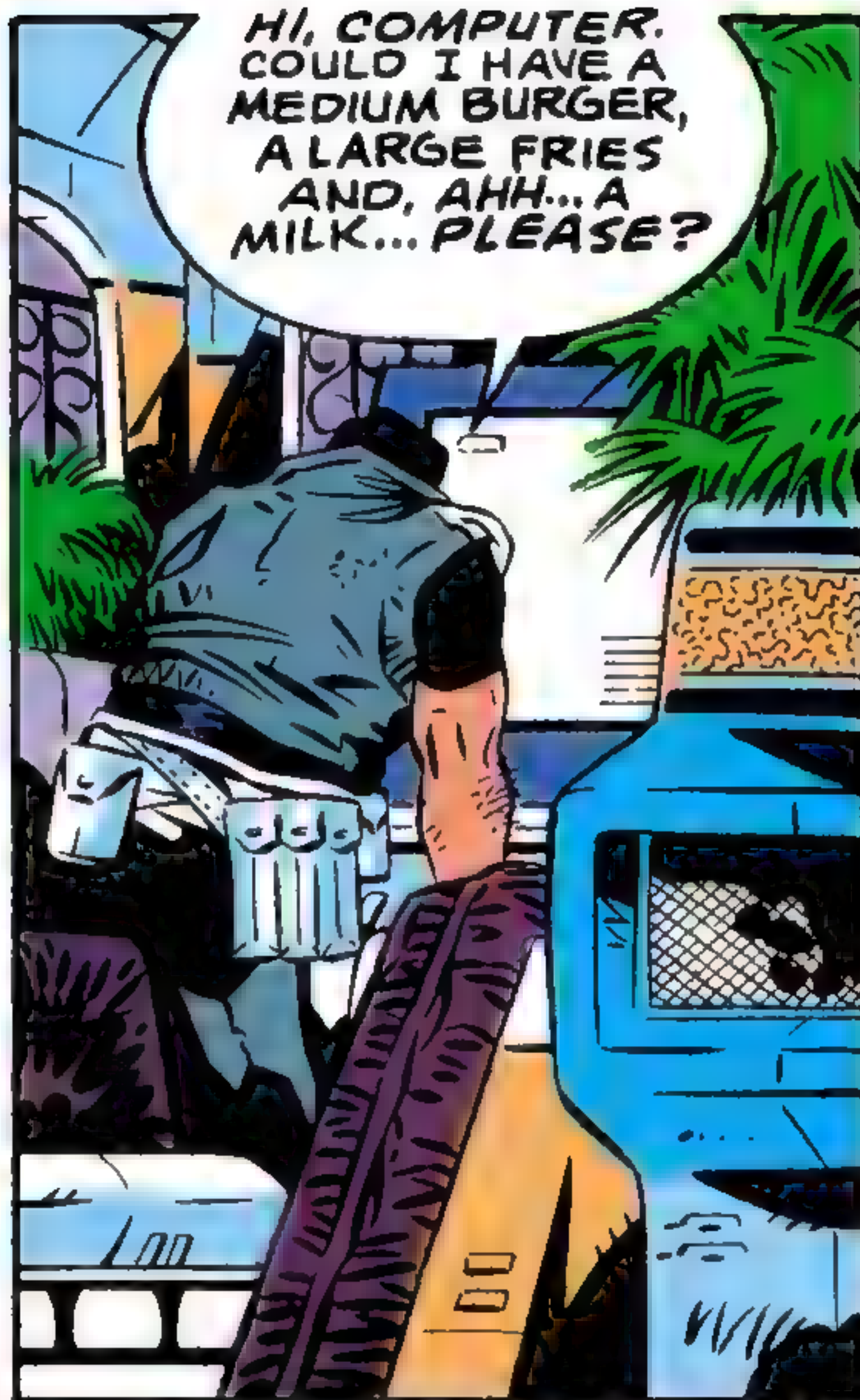


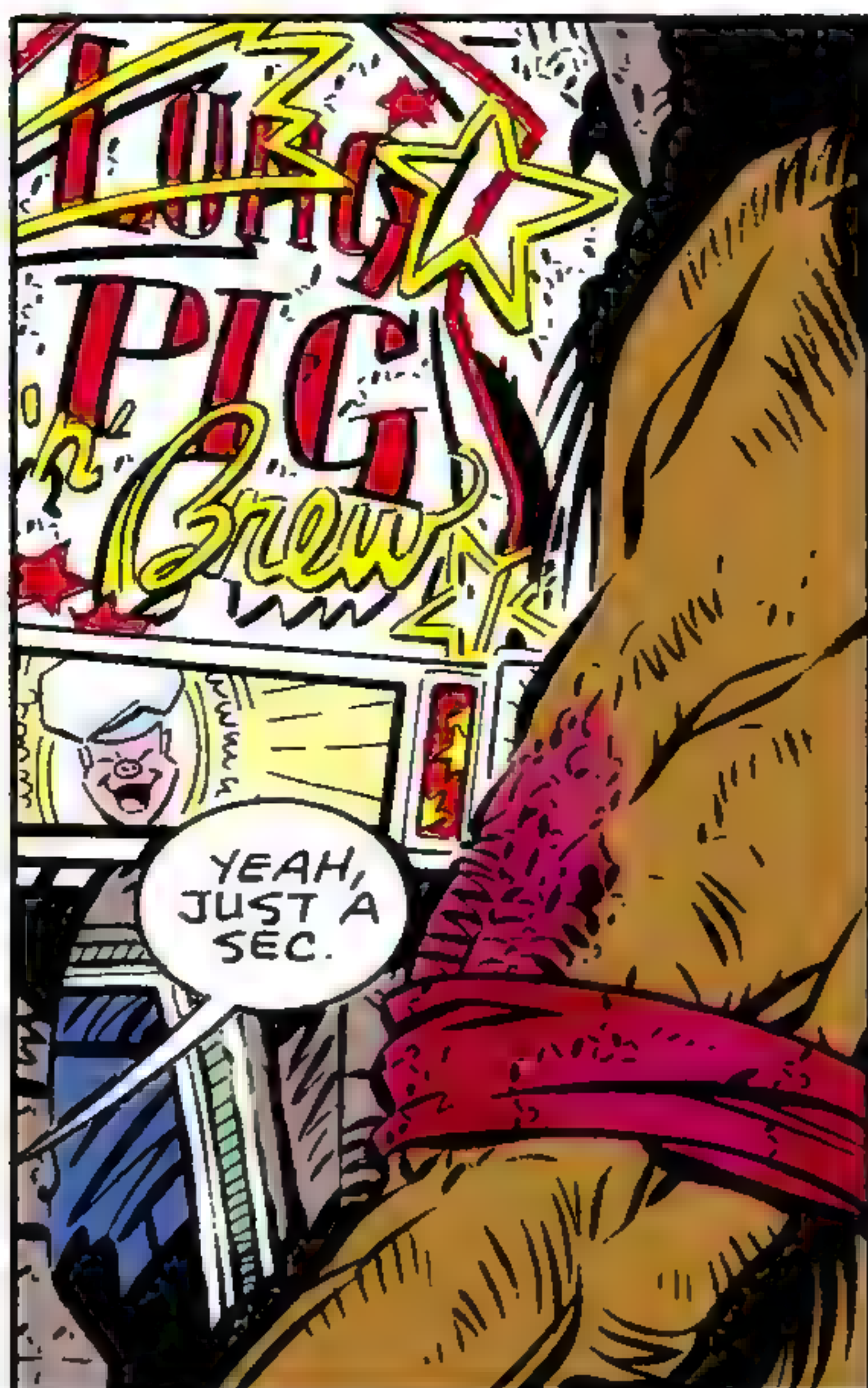
I STAYED
BEHIND...
PROTOCOL,
Y'KNOW...
ZZZ...

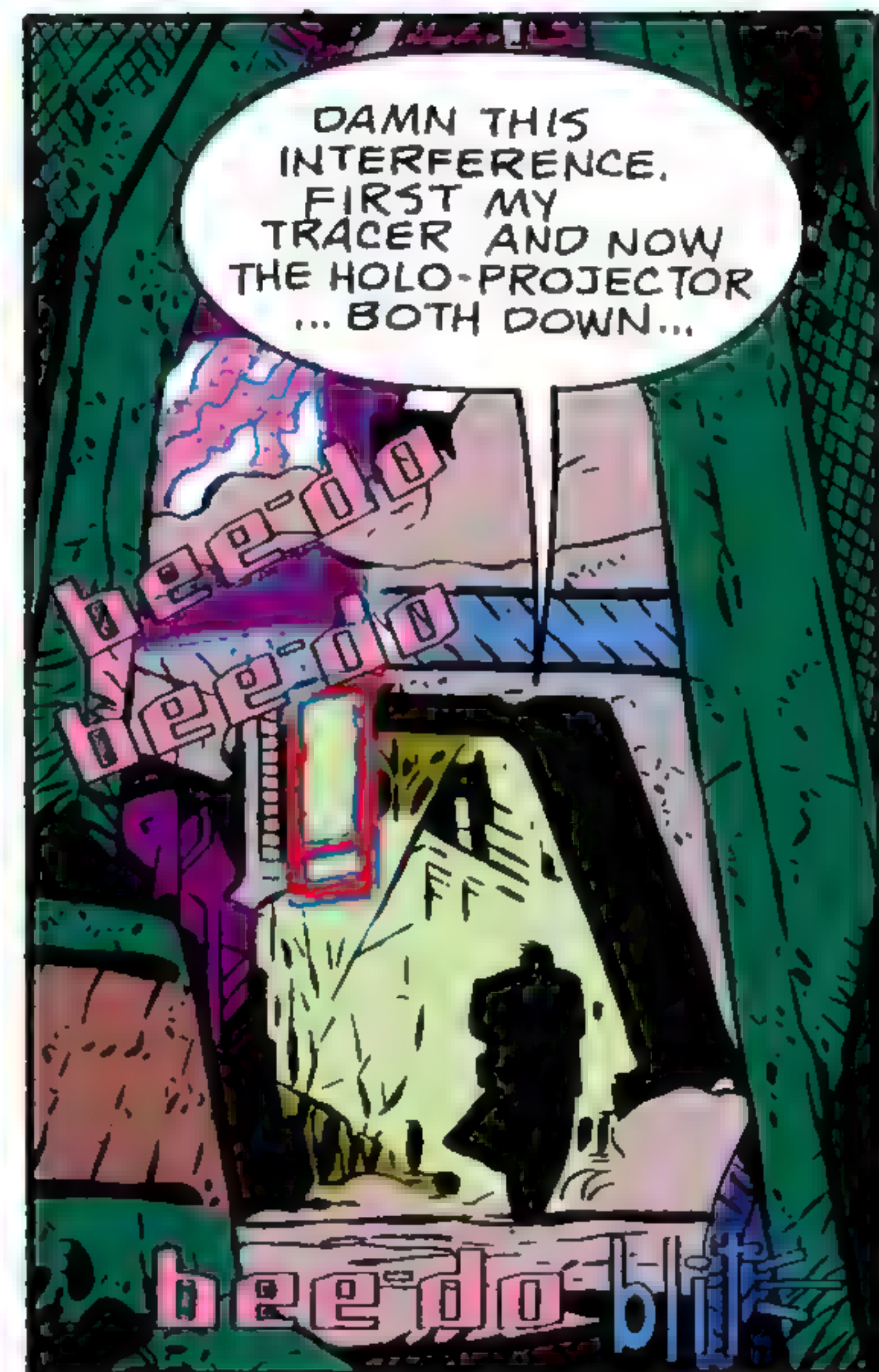
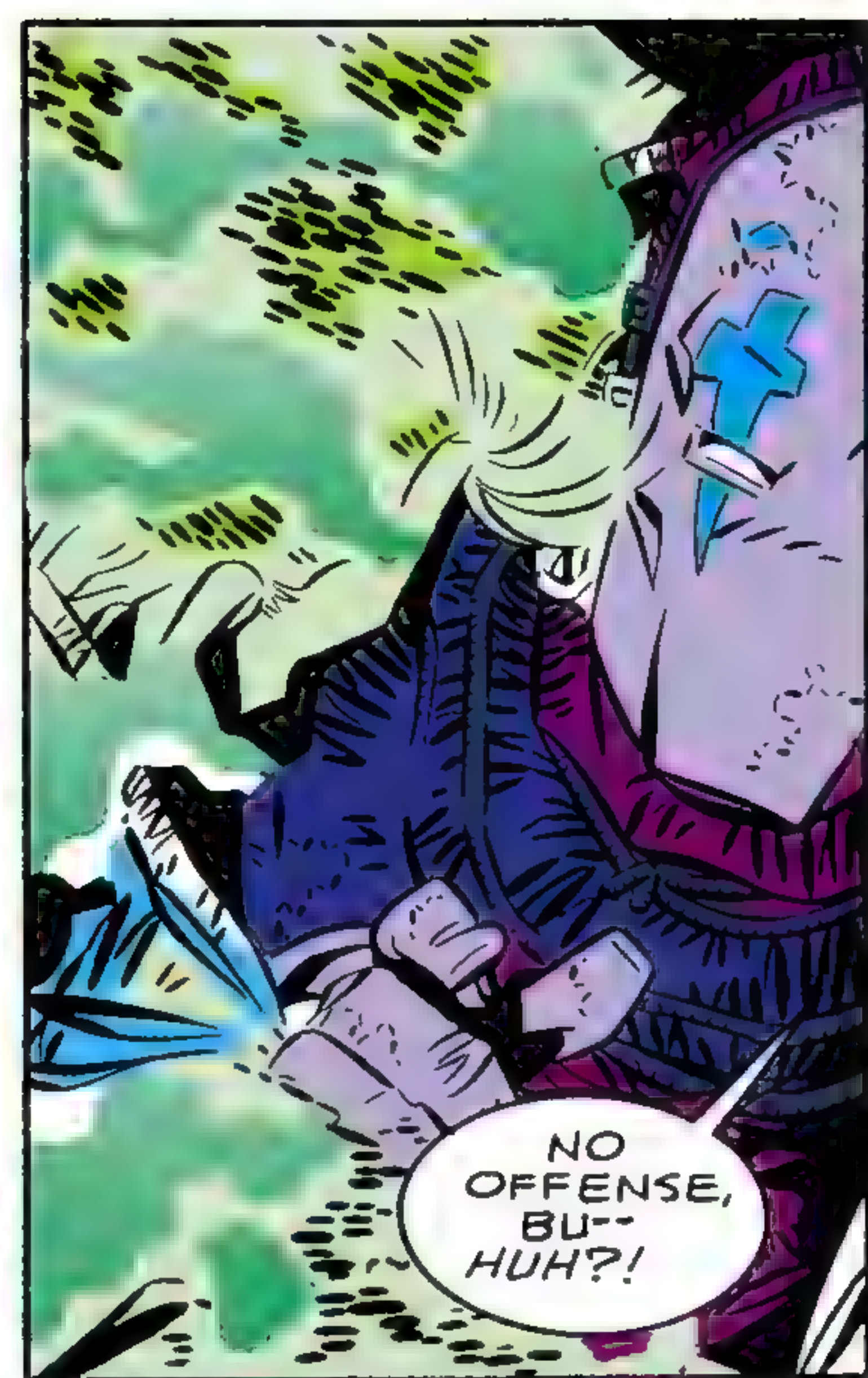
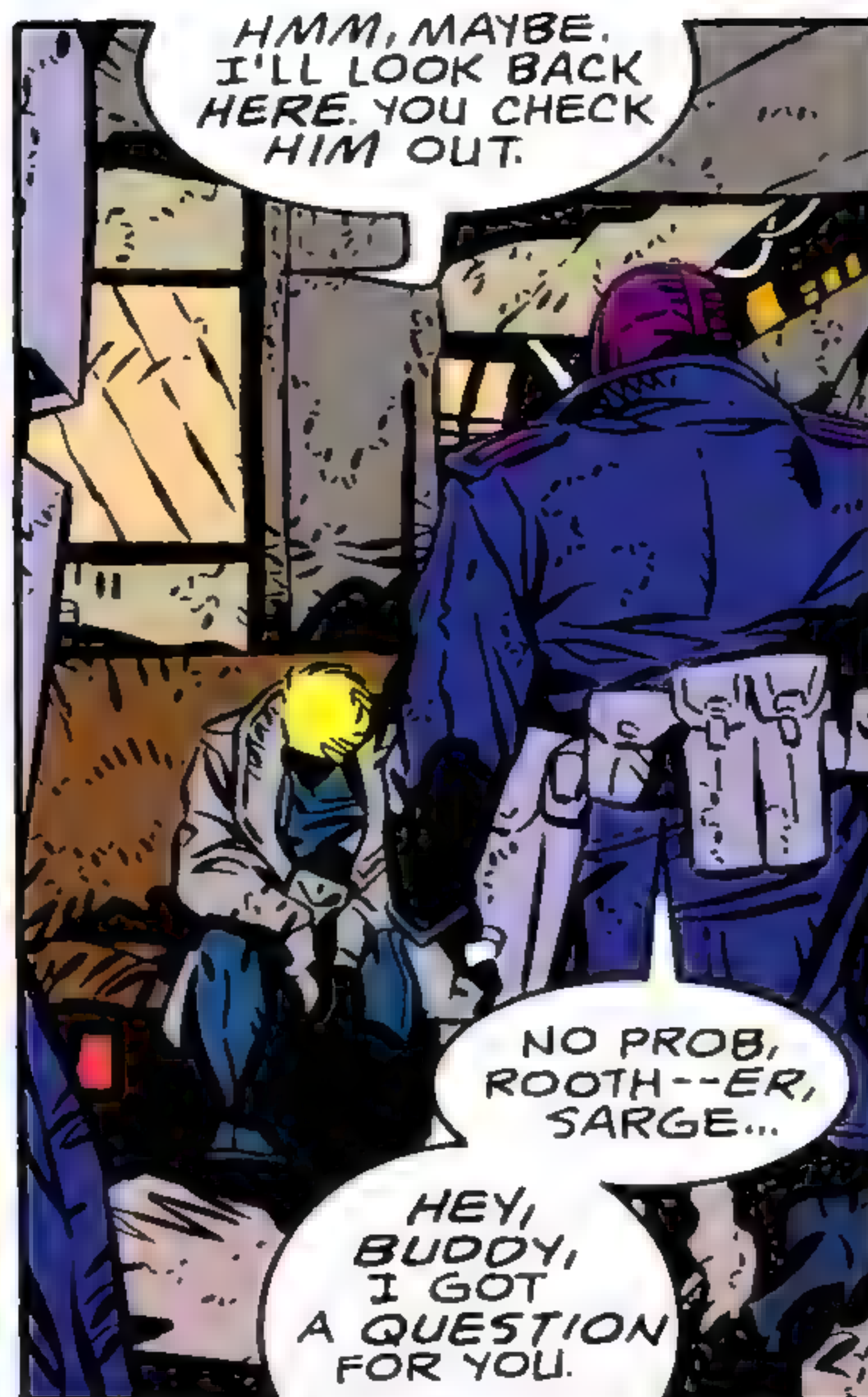
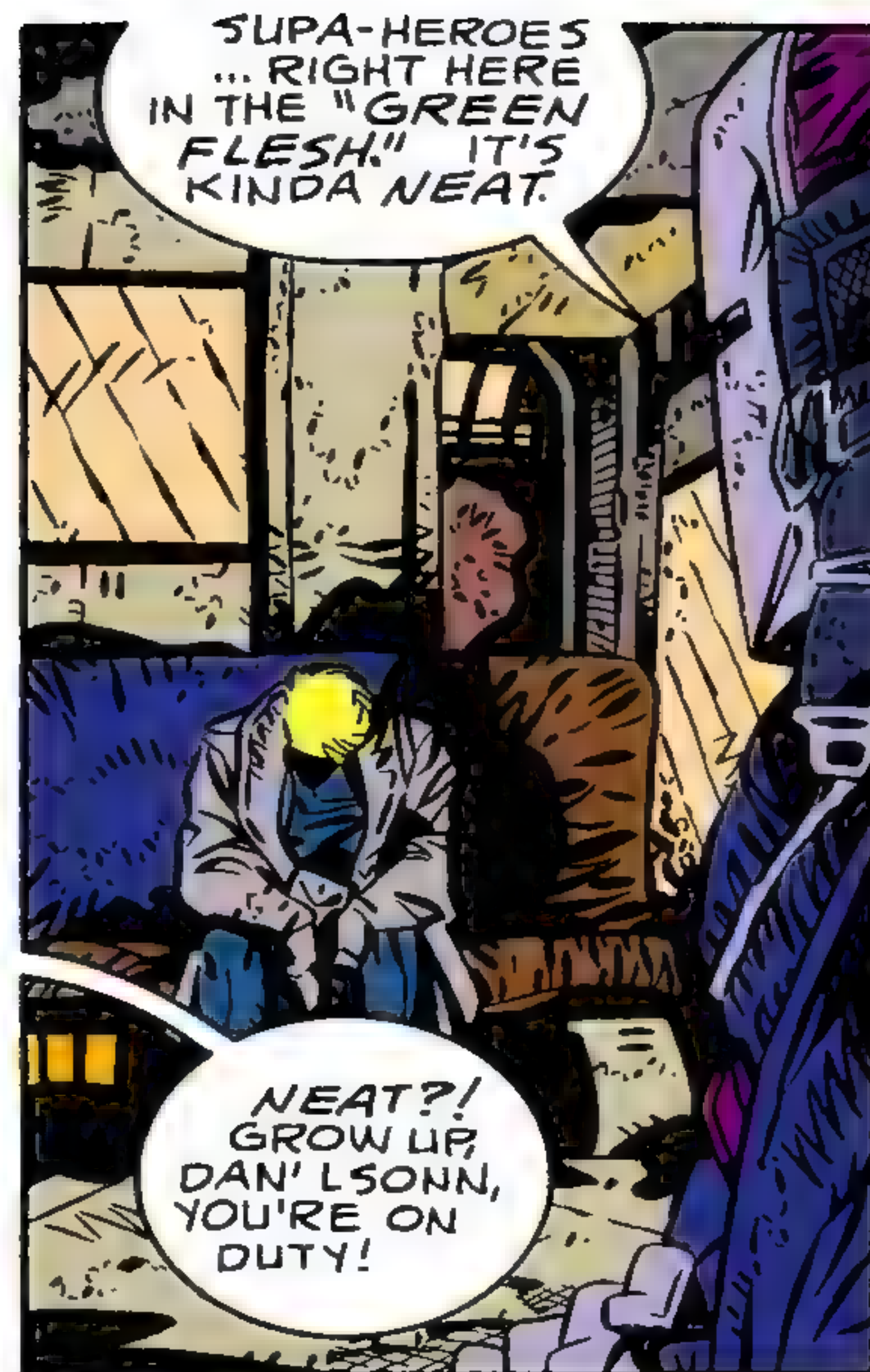
"STAYED
BEHIND"?

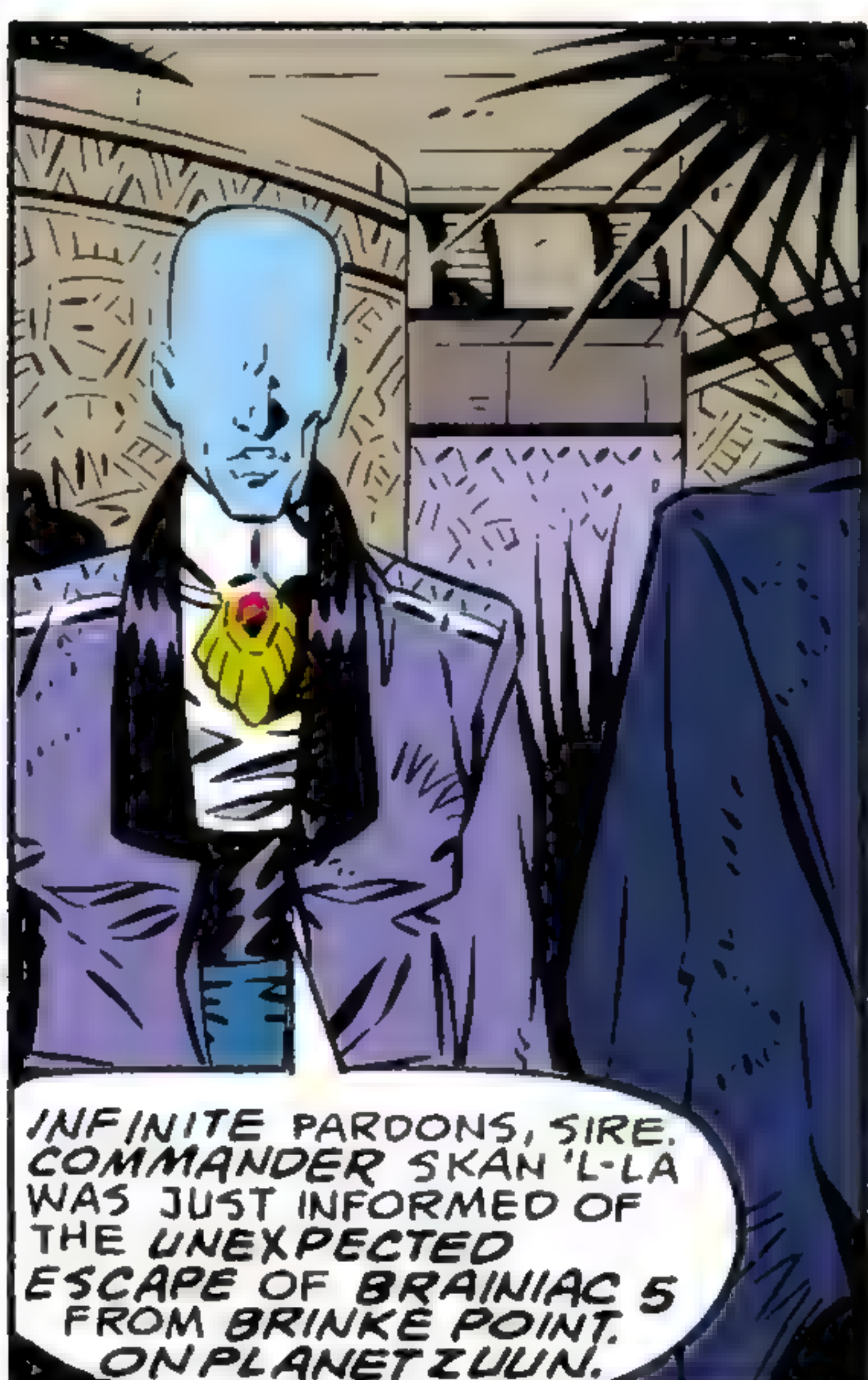
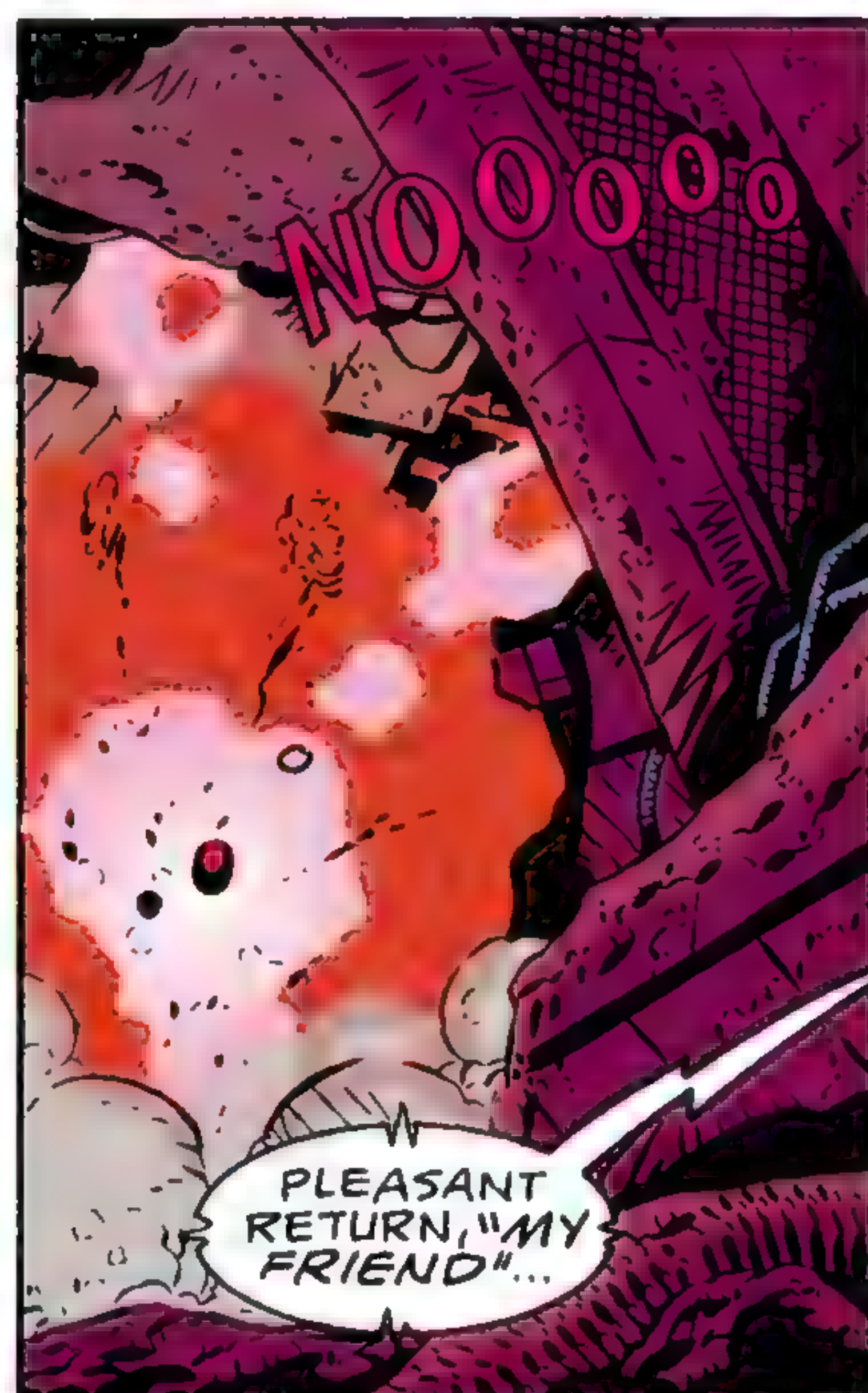
WHAT I'M TRYING
TO SAY IS... ZZZ
FURBALL BOLTED... AND
I'M NOT SURE I CAN
LOCATE HIM... ZZ... EVERY-
THING MECHANICAL
ON THIS WHOLE
PLANET, INCLUDING
MY INSTRUMENTS...

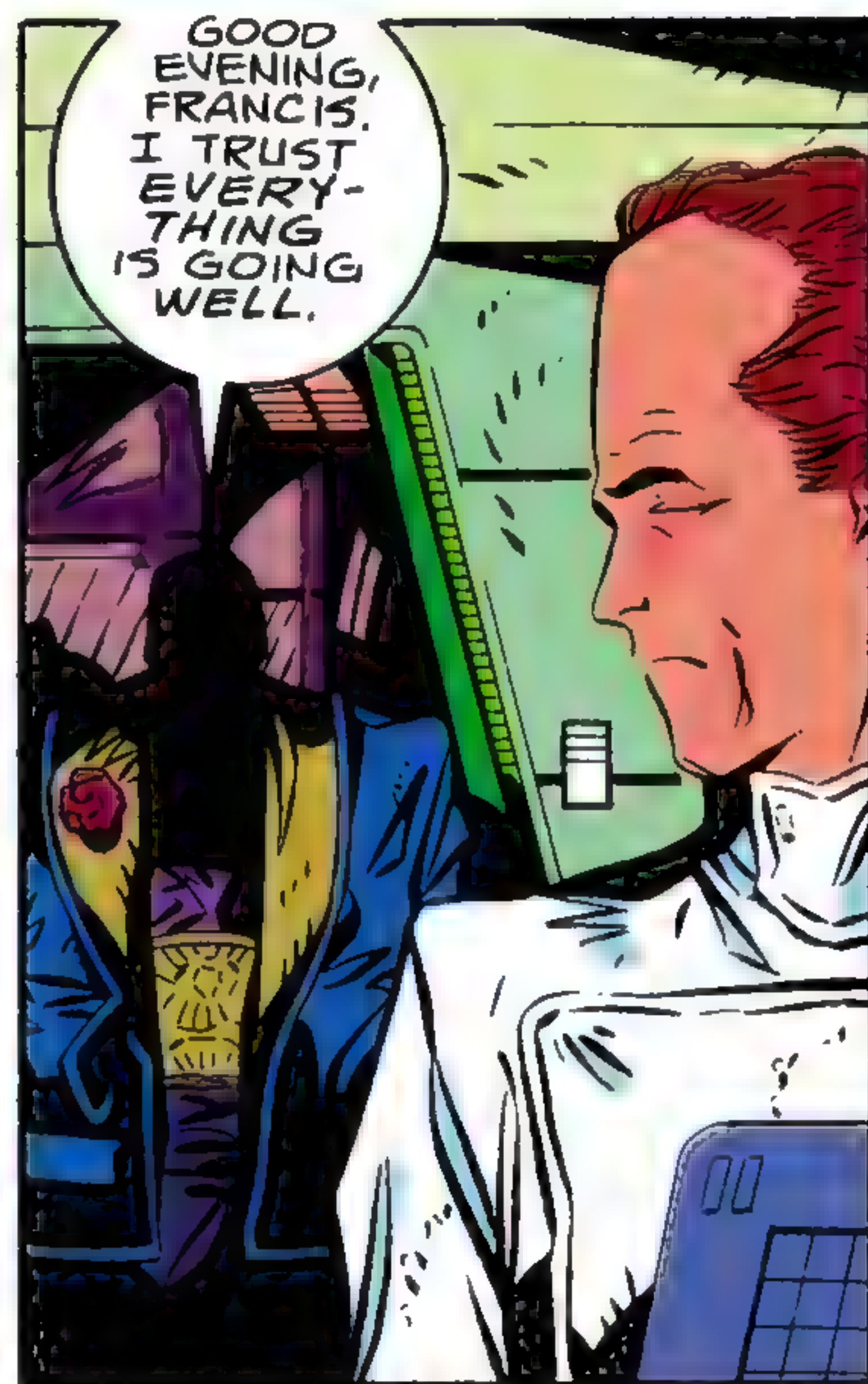
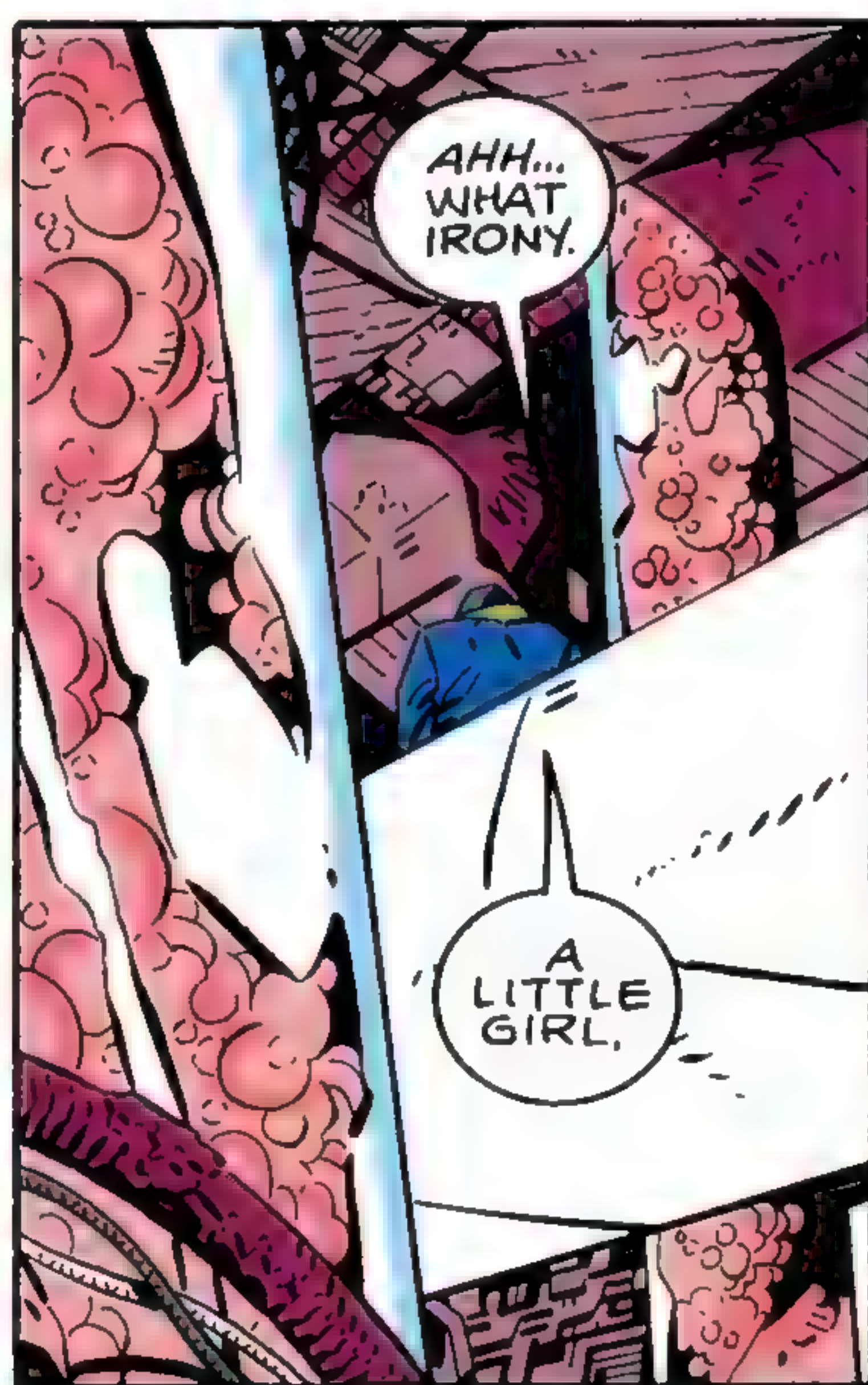
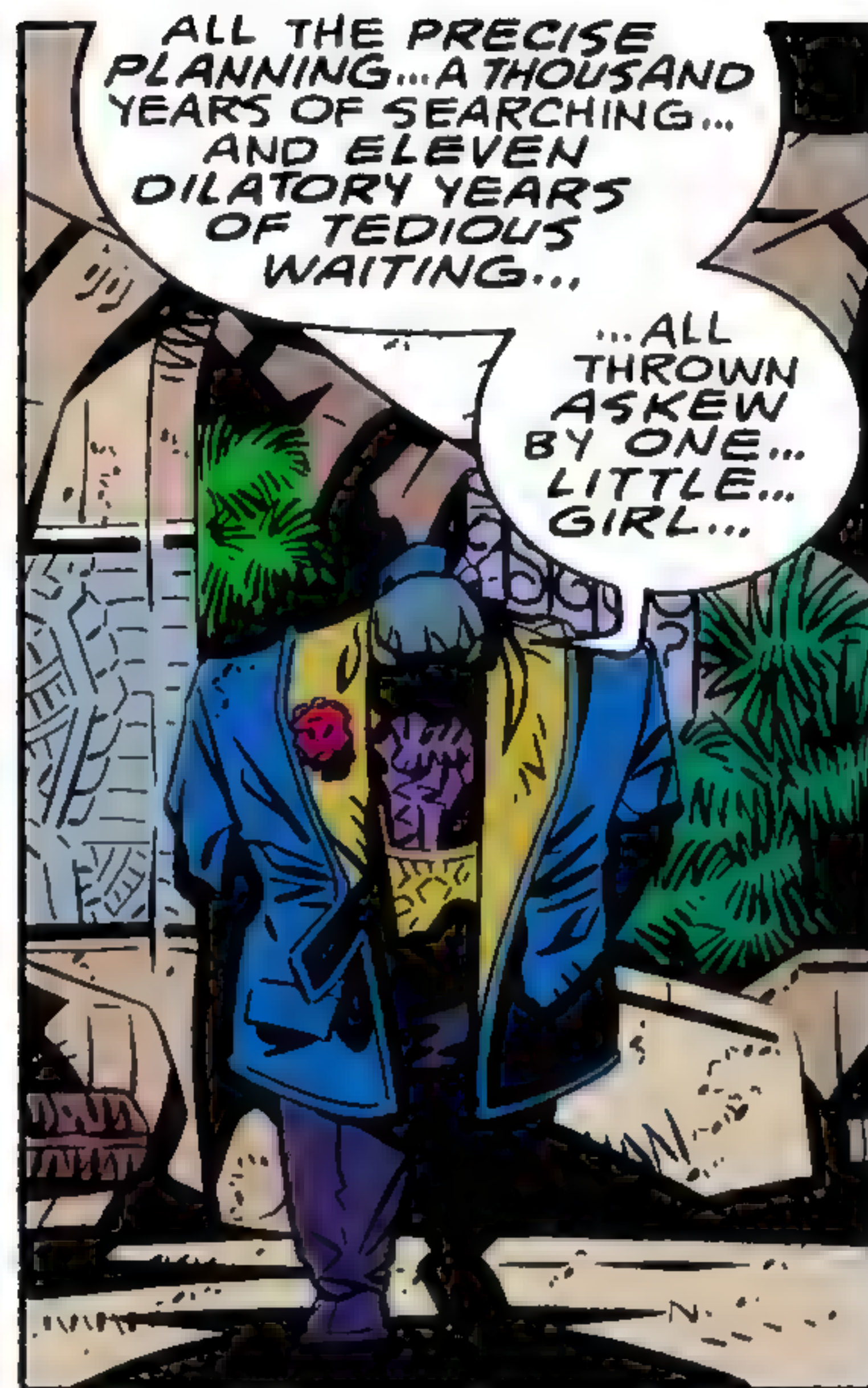
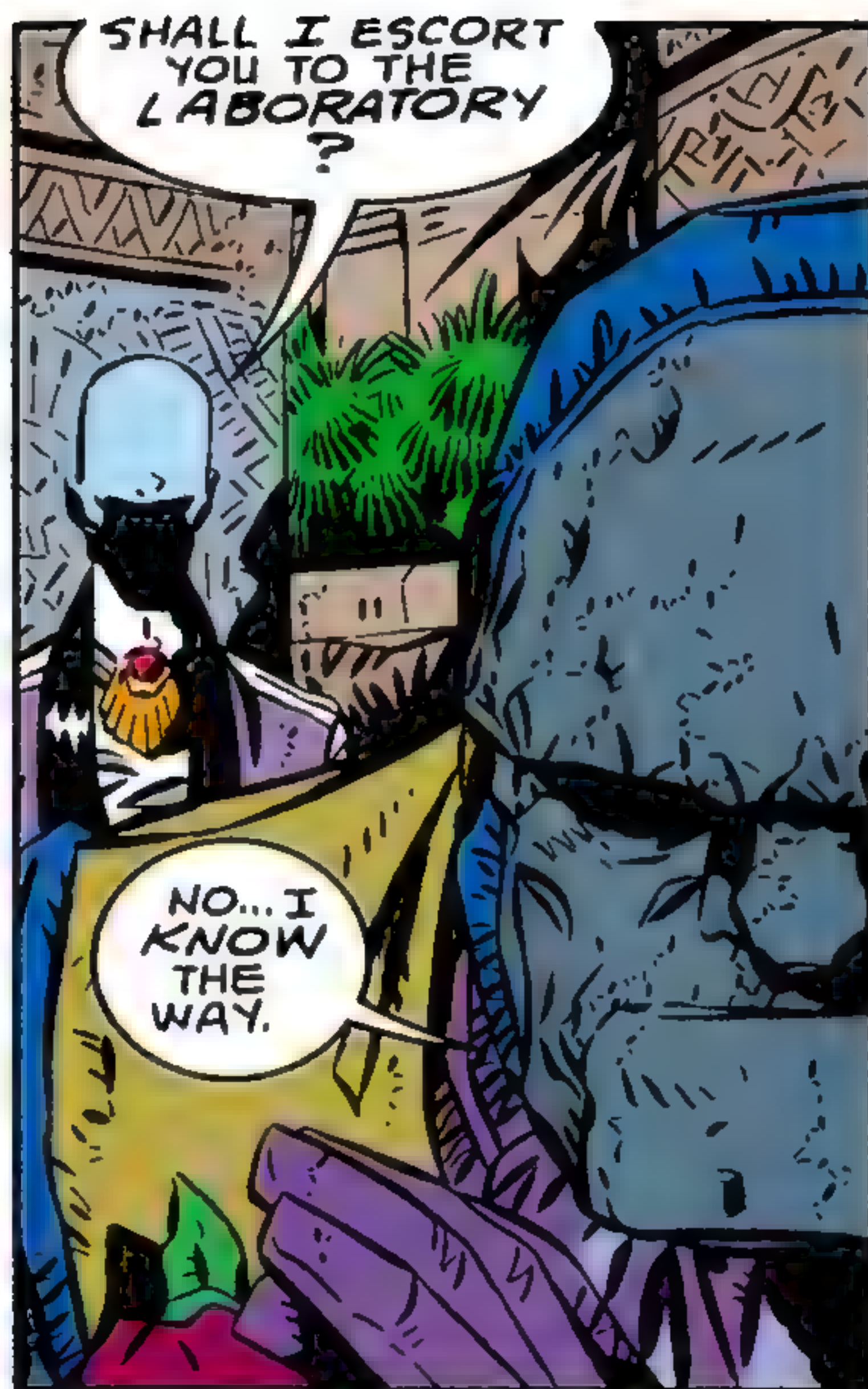


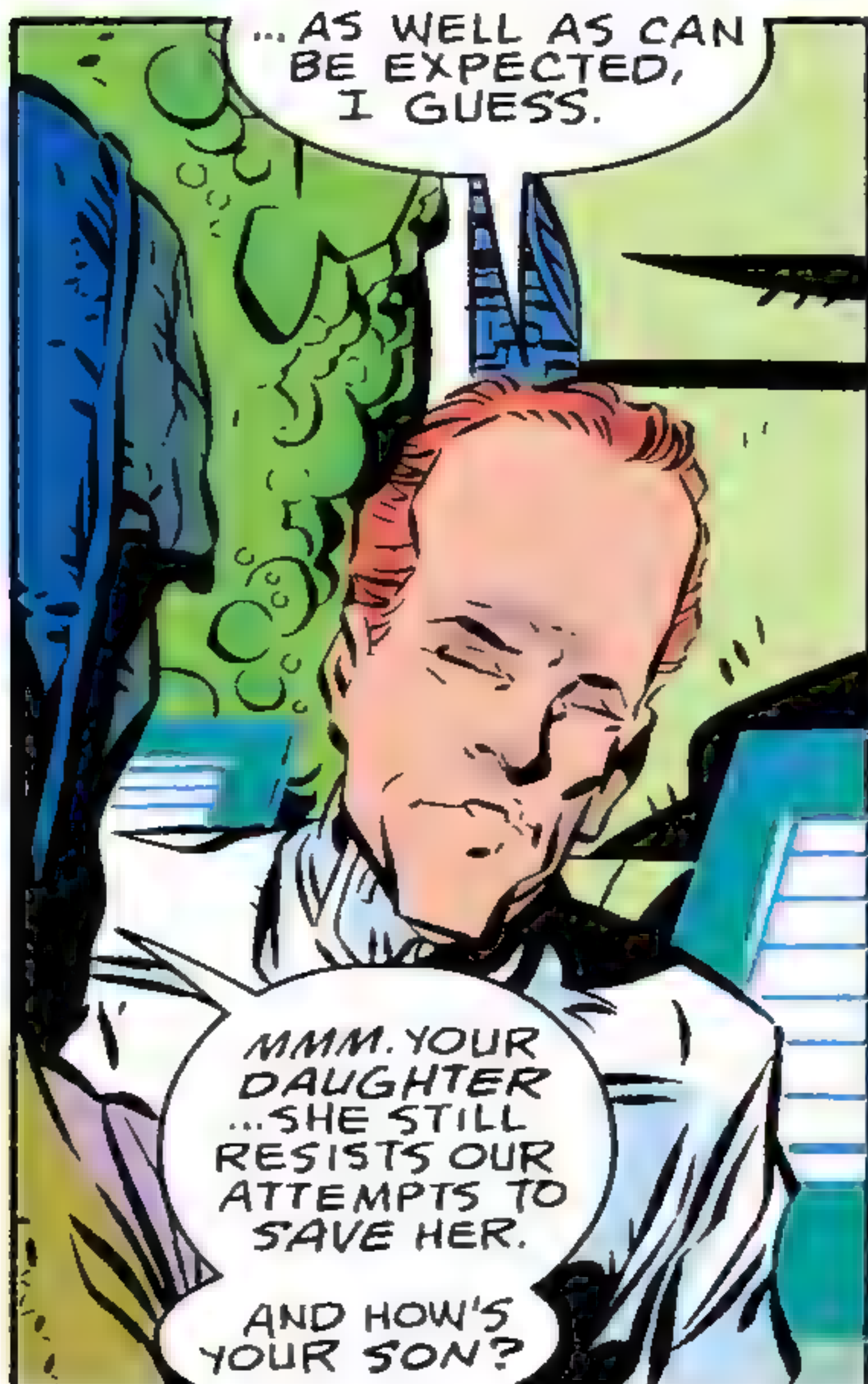








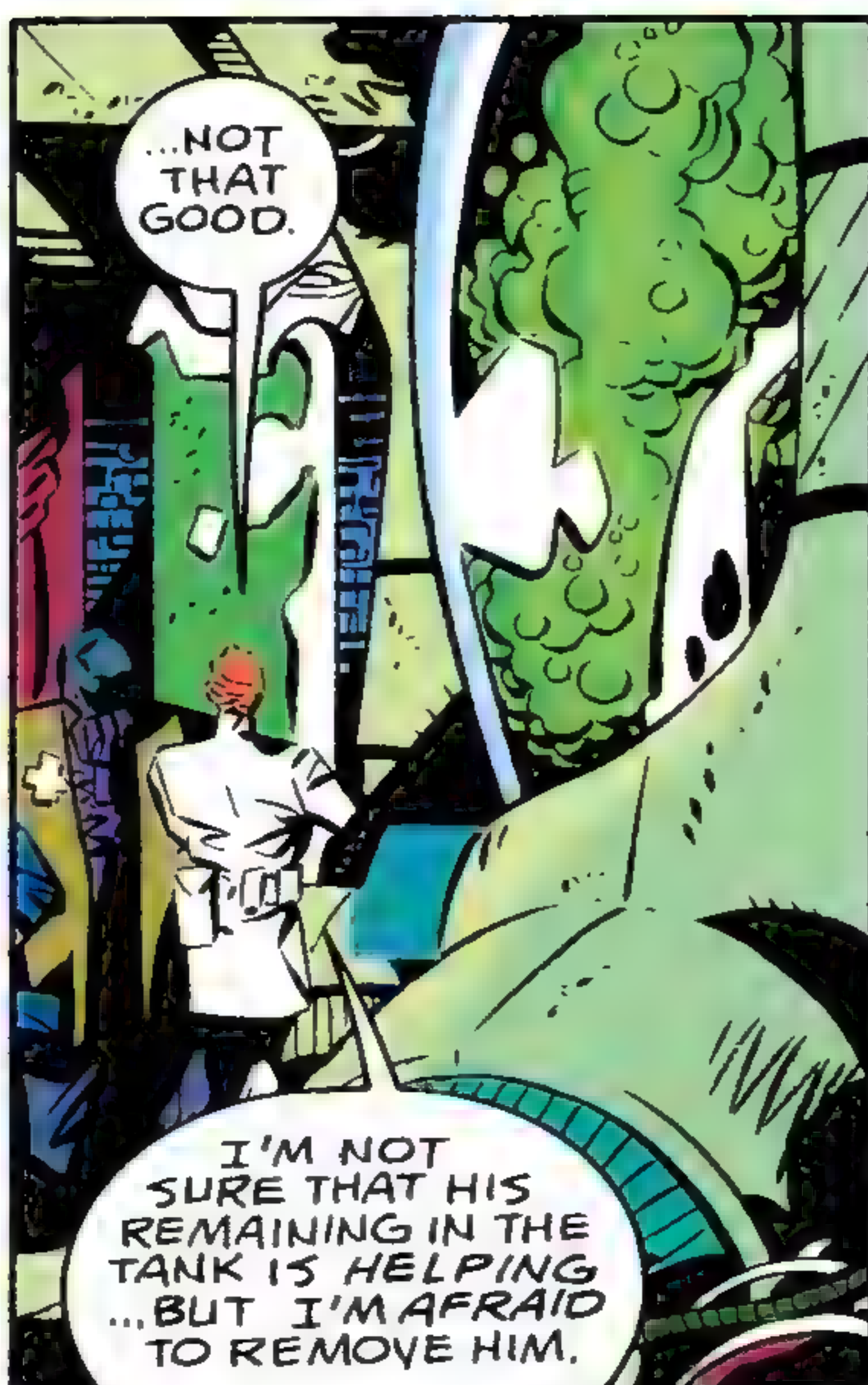




...AS WELL AS CAN BE EXPECTED, I GUESS.

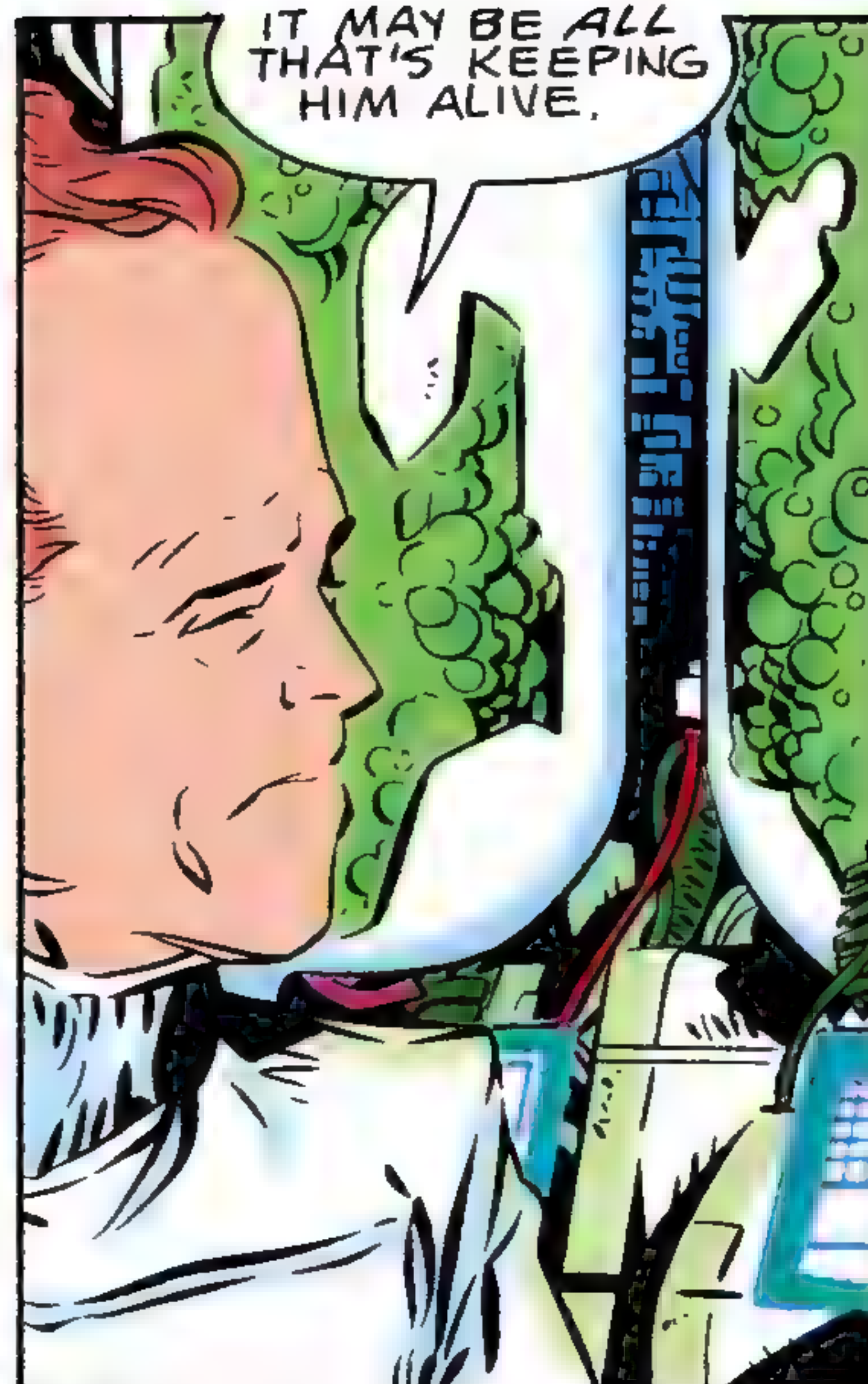
MMM. YOUR DAUGHTER ...SHE STILL RESISTS OUR ATTEMPTS TO SAVE HER.

AND HOW'S YOUR SON?

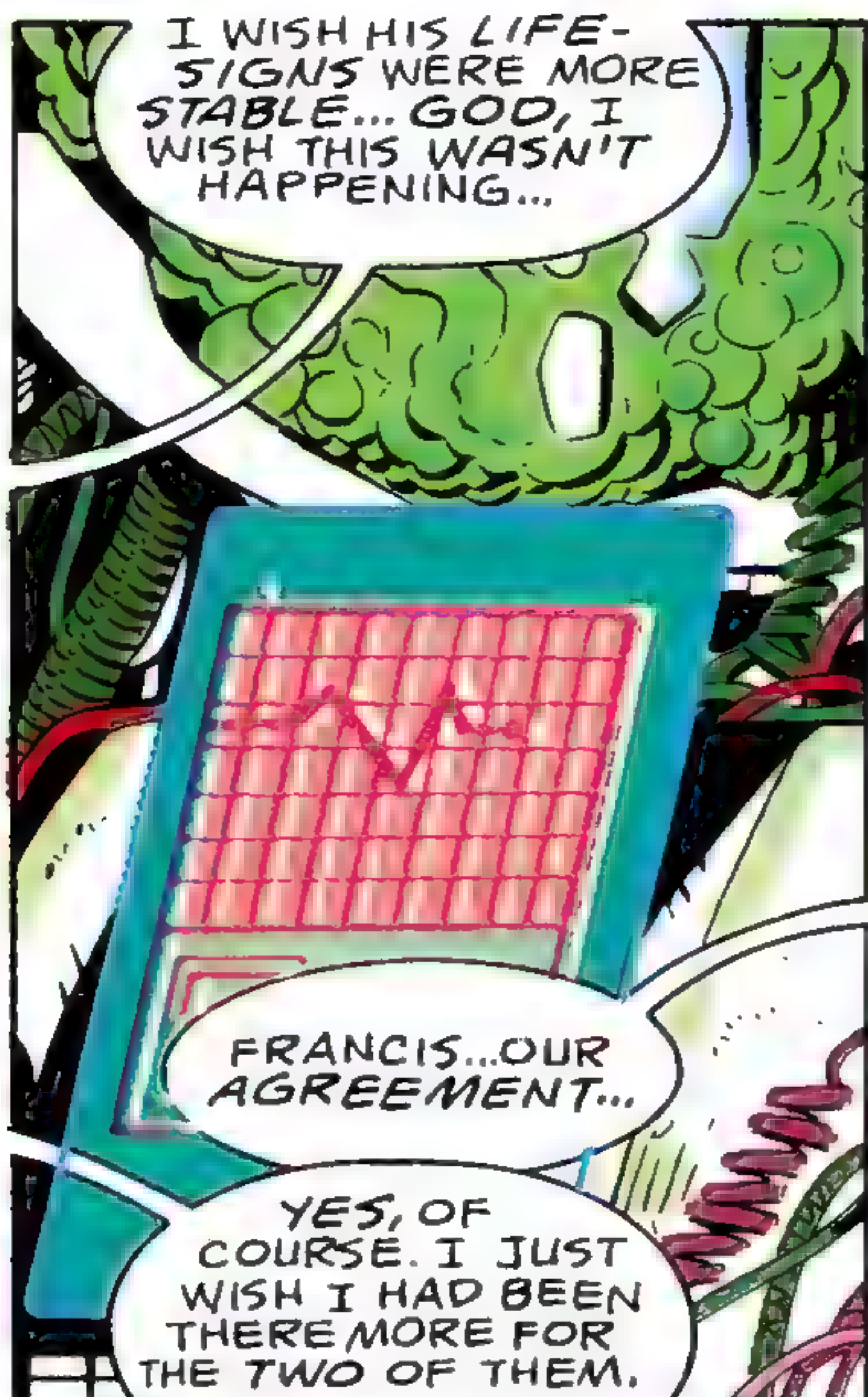


...NOT THAT GOOD.

I'M NOT SURE THAT HIS REMAINING IN THE TANK IS HELPING ...BUT I'M AFRAID TO REMOVE HIM.



IT MAY BE ALL THAT'S KEEPING HIM ALIVE.



I WISH HIS LIFE-SIGNS WERE MORE STABLE... GOD, I WISH THIS WASN'T HAPPENING...

FRANCIS...OUR AGREEMENT...

YES, OF COURSE. I JUST WISH I HAD BEEN THERE MORE FOR THE TWO OF THEM.



THEIR MOTHER WOULD HAVE CARED FOR THEM SO MUCH BETTER THAN I...

CODA AND ARIA ALWAYS SEEMED SO SIMILAR...AND SUCH OPPOSITES. BUT ALWAYS SO...CONNECTED.



WELL, THAT'S WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT, ISN'T IT?



I UNDERSTAND YOUR DILEMMA, FRANCIS. BUT CHILDREN HAVE SEPARATE PATHS, APART FROM OUR MACHINATIONS...

...AND THIS REALLY ISN'T OUR DECISION.



AND BELIEVE ME, I KNOW WHAT A DISAPPOINTMENT CHILDREN CAN BE.

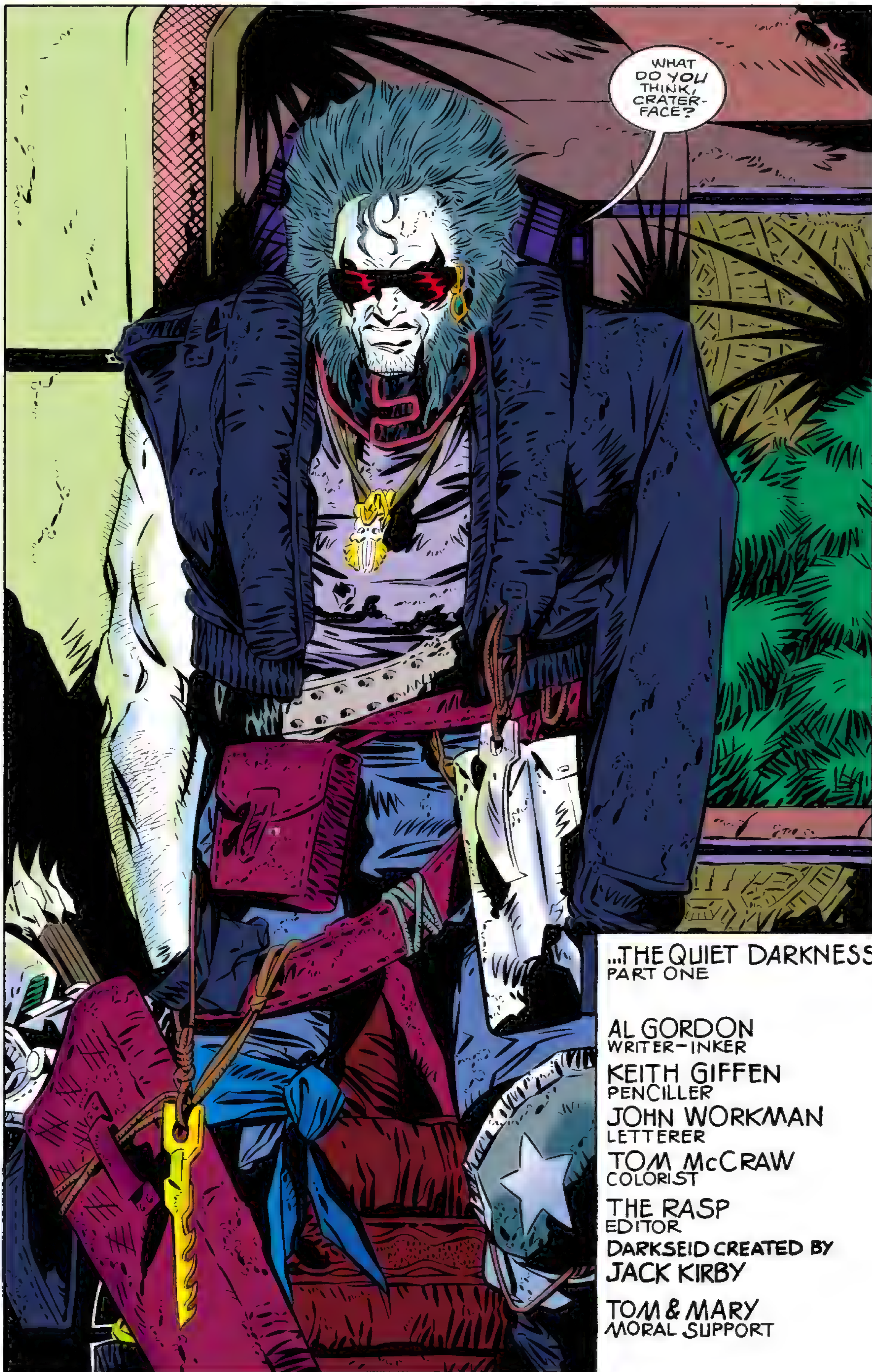
HEY! BIG GUY!



...AHH... MY PET PROJECT.

I TRUST YOU'RE READY TO TRY YOUR HAND.

...TRY MY HAND?



...THE QUIET DARKNESS
PART ONE

AL GORDON
WRITER-INKER

KEITH GIFFEN
PENCILLER

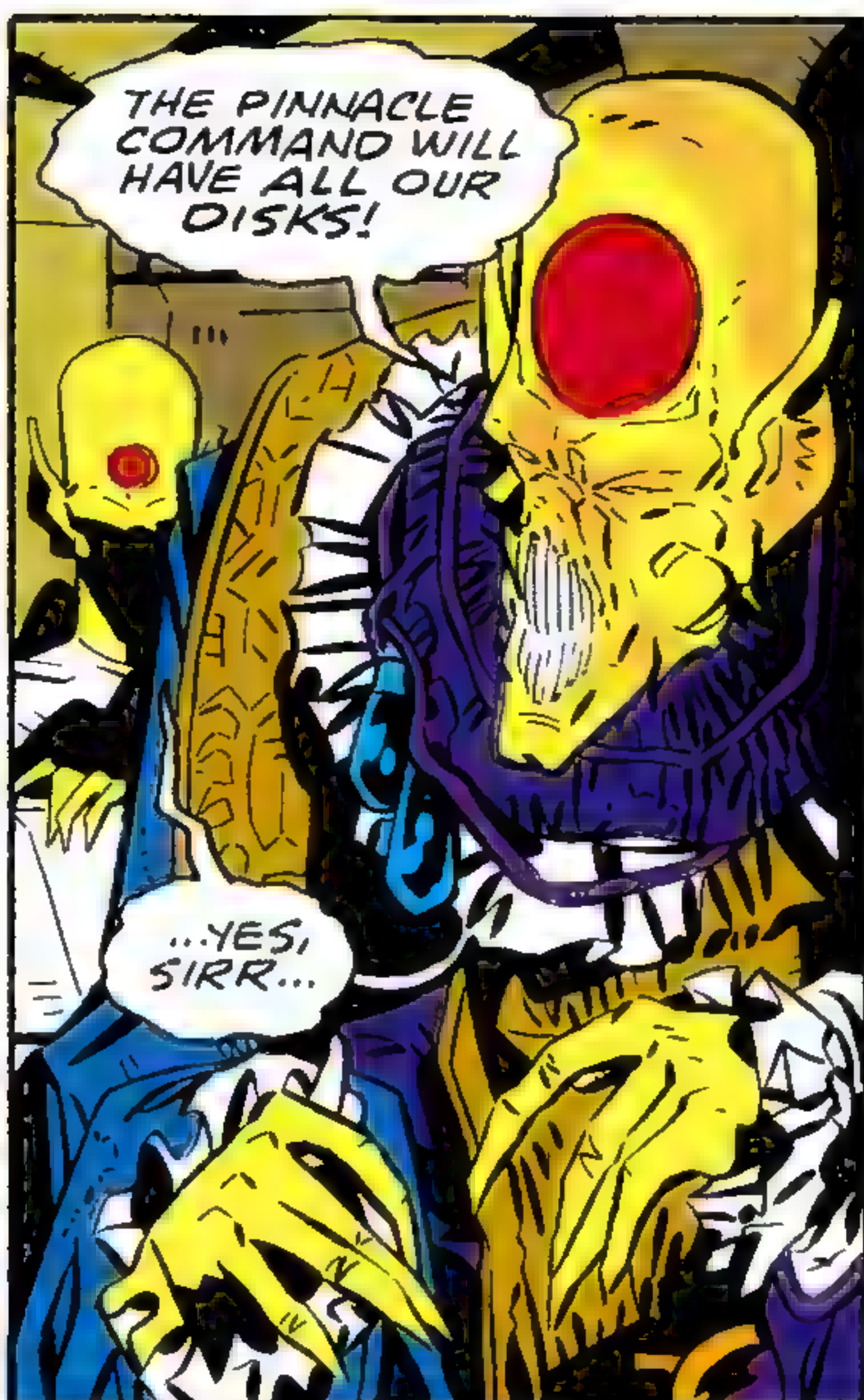
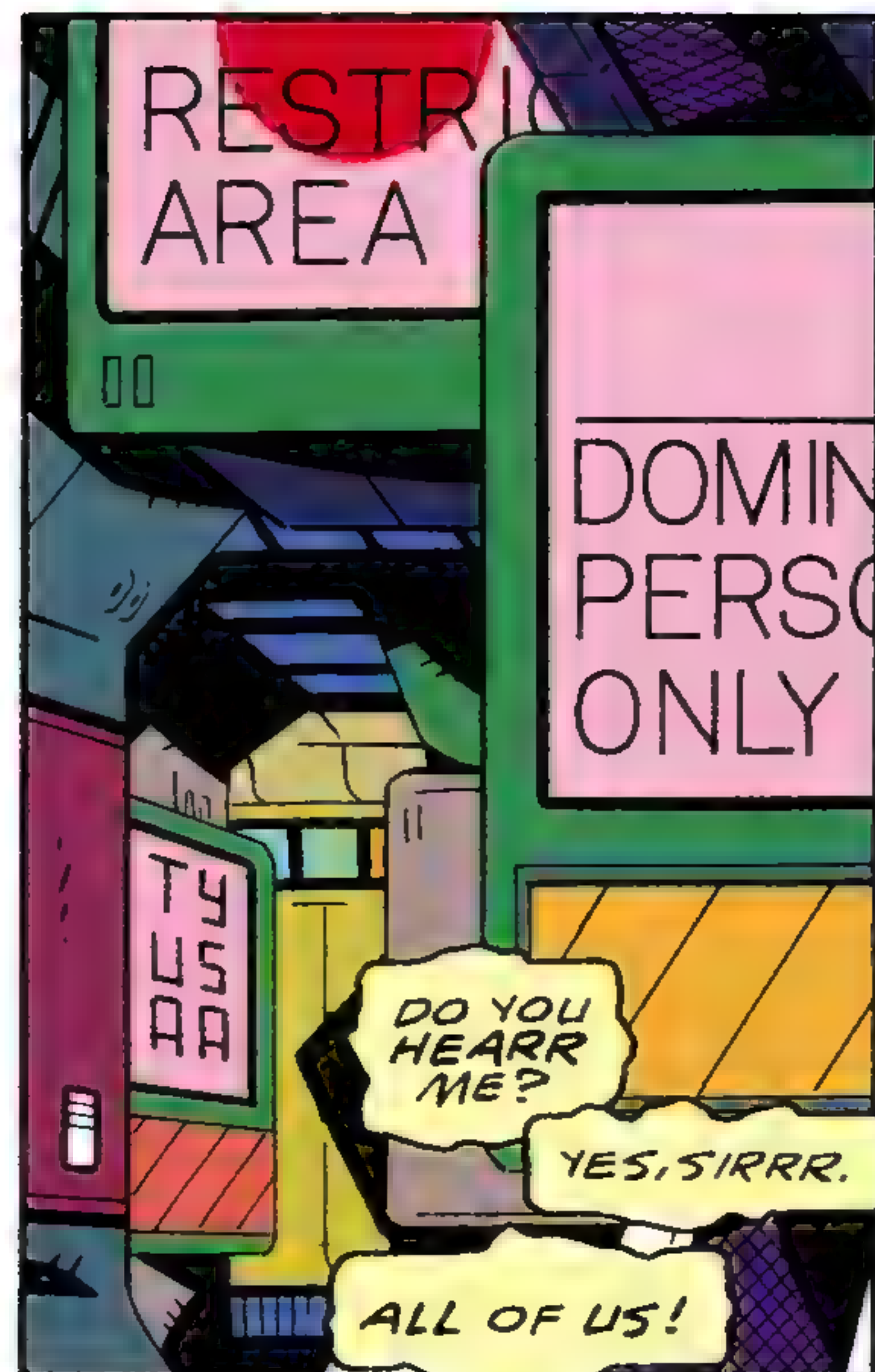
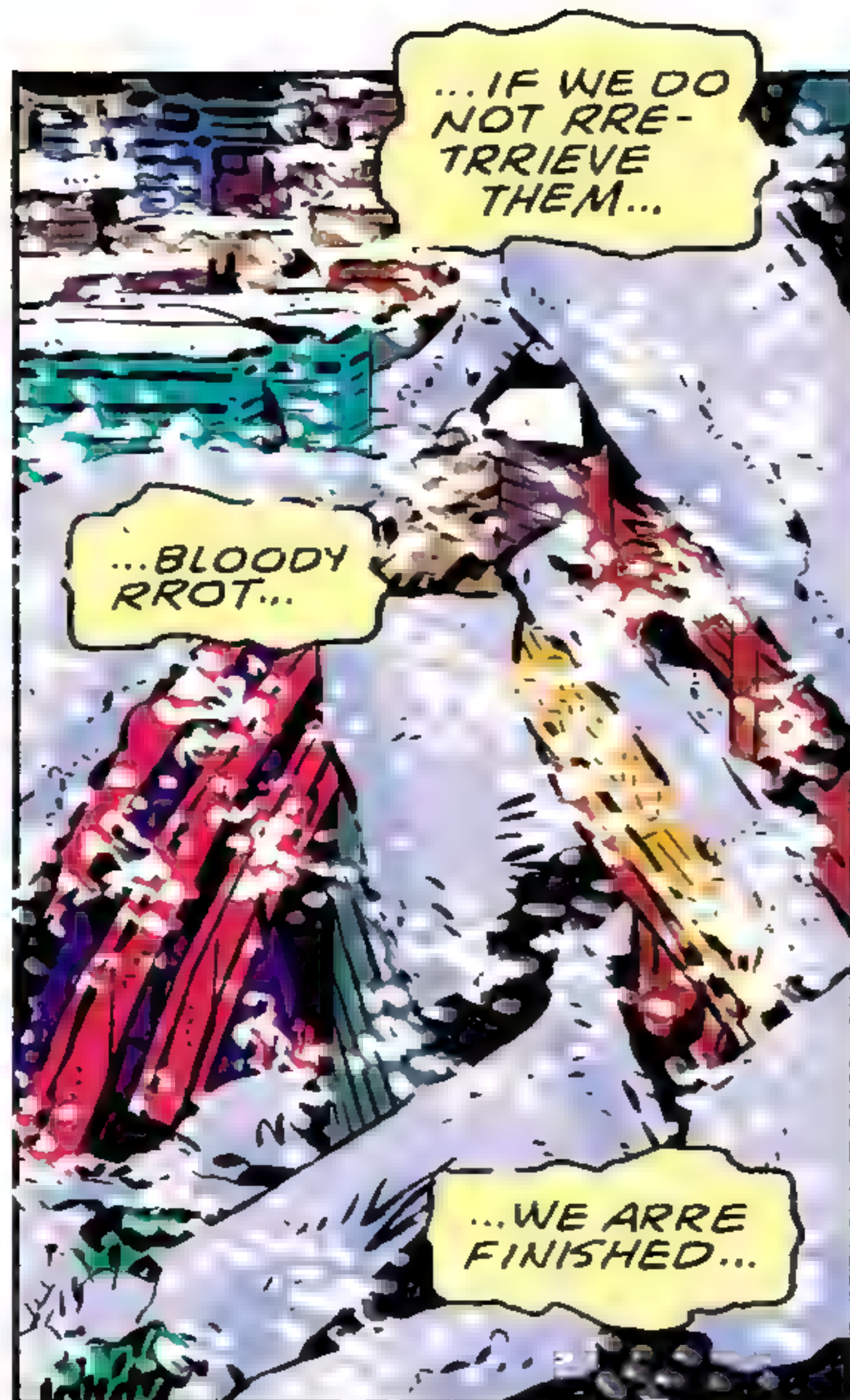
JOHN WORKMAN
LETTERER

TOM McCRAW
COLORIST

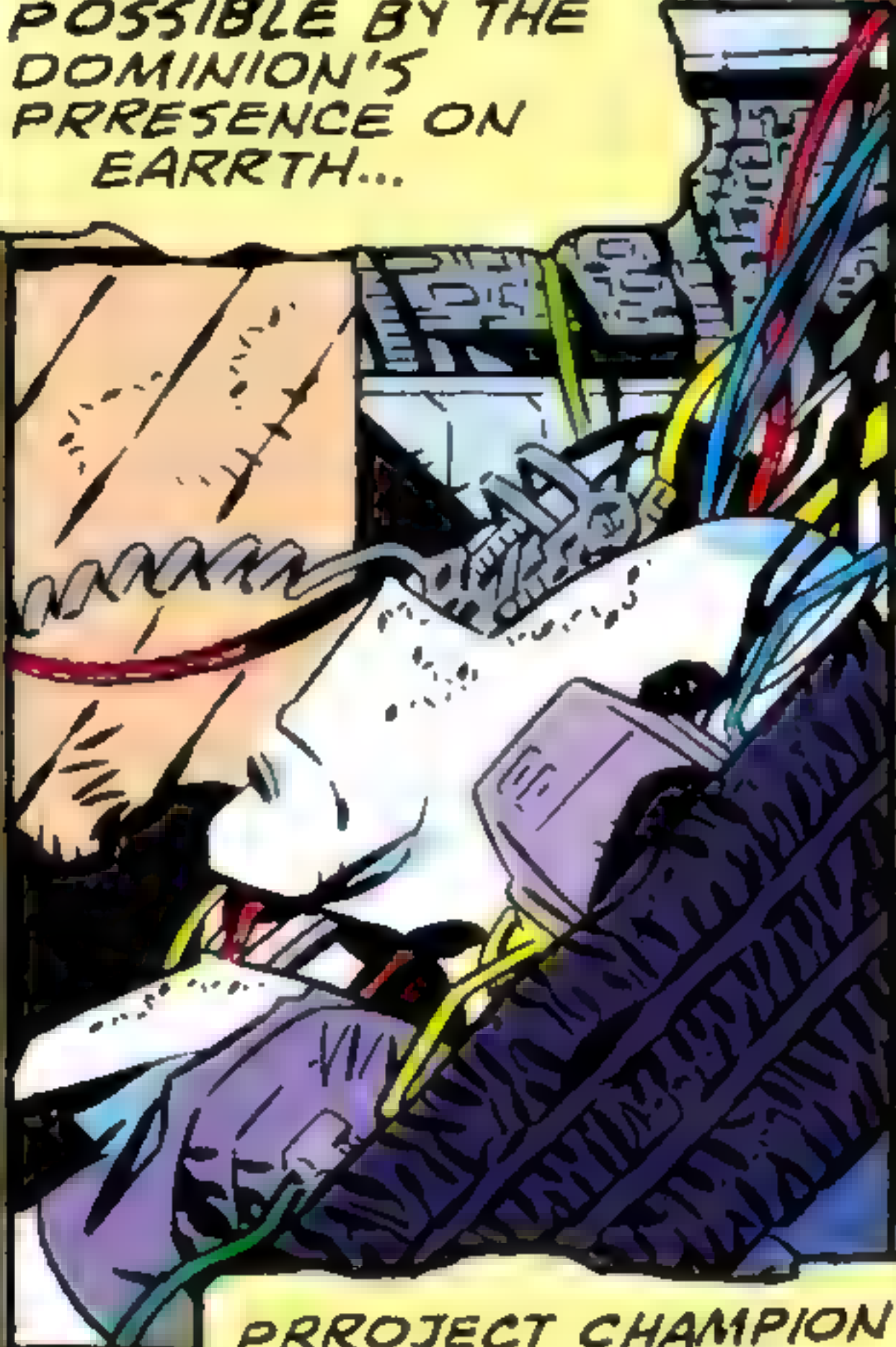
THE RASP
EDITOR

DARKSEID CREATED BY
JACK KIRBY

TOM & MARY
MORAL SUPPORT

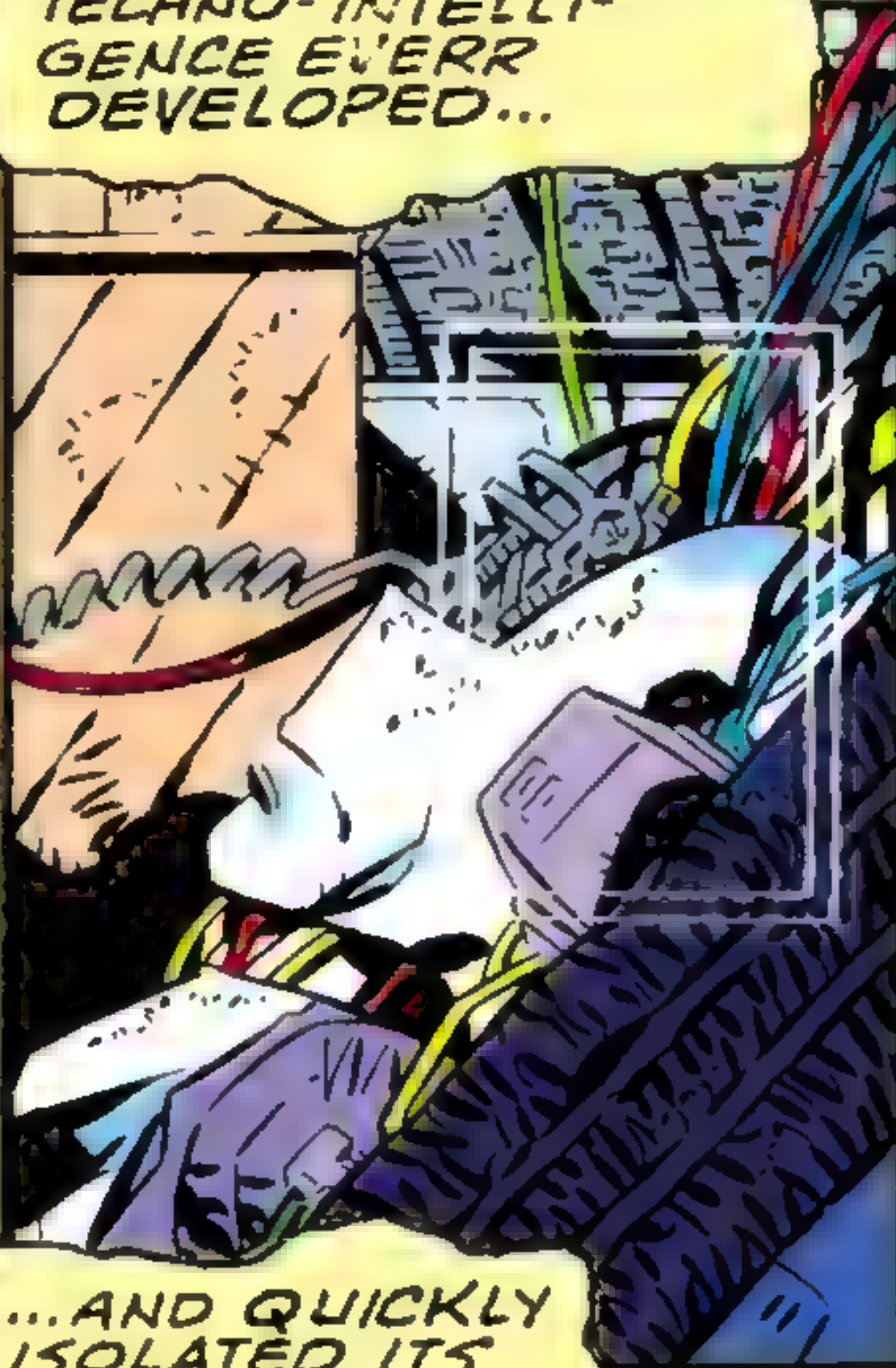


--ANOTHER BREAK-THROUGH MADE POSSIBLE BY THE DOMINION'S PRESENCE ON EARTH...



PROJECT CHAMPION HAD ITS START IN OUR WEISINGER LABORATORIES...

...WHERE WE SECURED THE MOST ADVANCED TECHNO-INTELLIGENCE EVER DEVELOPED...

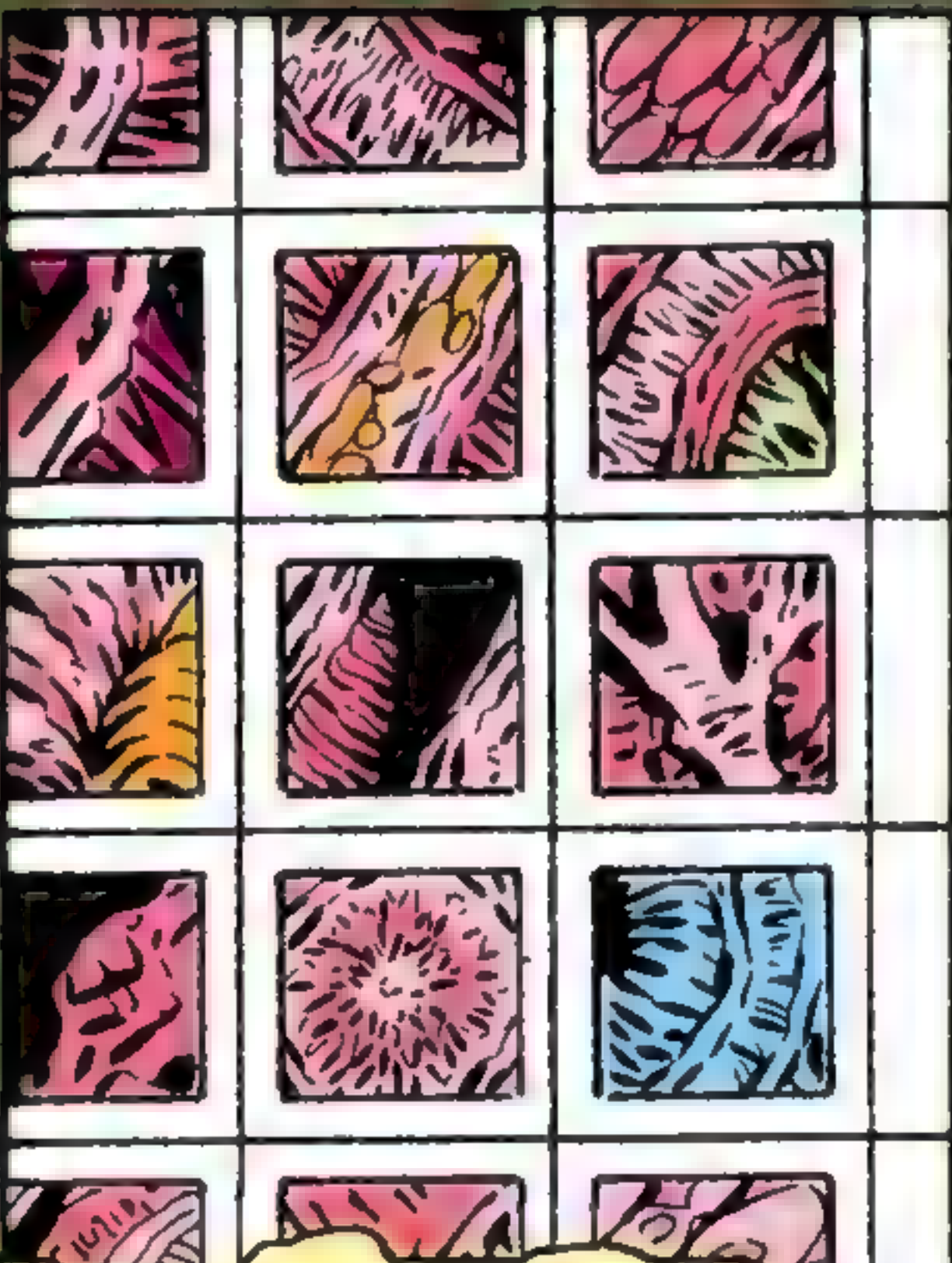


...AND QUICKLY ISOLATED ITS INTEGRAL MATRIX...

FROM THERE, IT WAS A SIMPLE MATTER FOR DOMINION BIO-ENGINEERING TO REBUILD THE MATRIX WITHIN A GENETIC FRAMEWORK...



...AND GROW THE PROJECT CHAMPION SPECIMEN FROM THAT REBUILT MATRIX.



BUT NOT BEFORE SPLICING IN BOLD, NEW GENETIC COMPONENTS EXTRACTED FROM OUR INVALUABLE BATCH SW6.

AND THE SUCCESS OF THAT SPLICING HAS BEEN GRATIFYING...

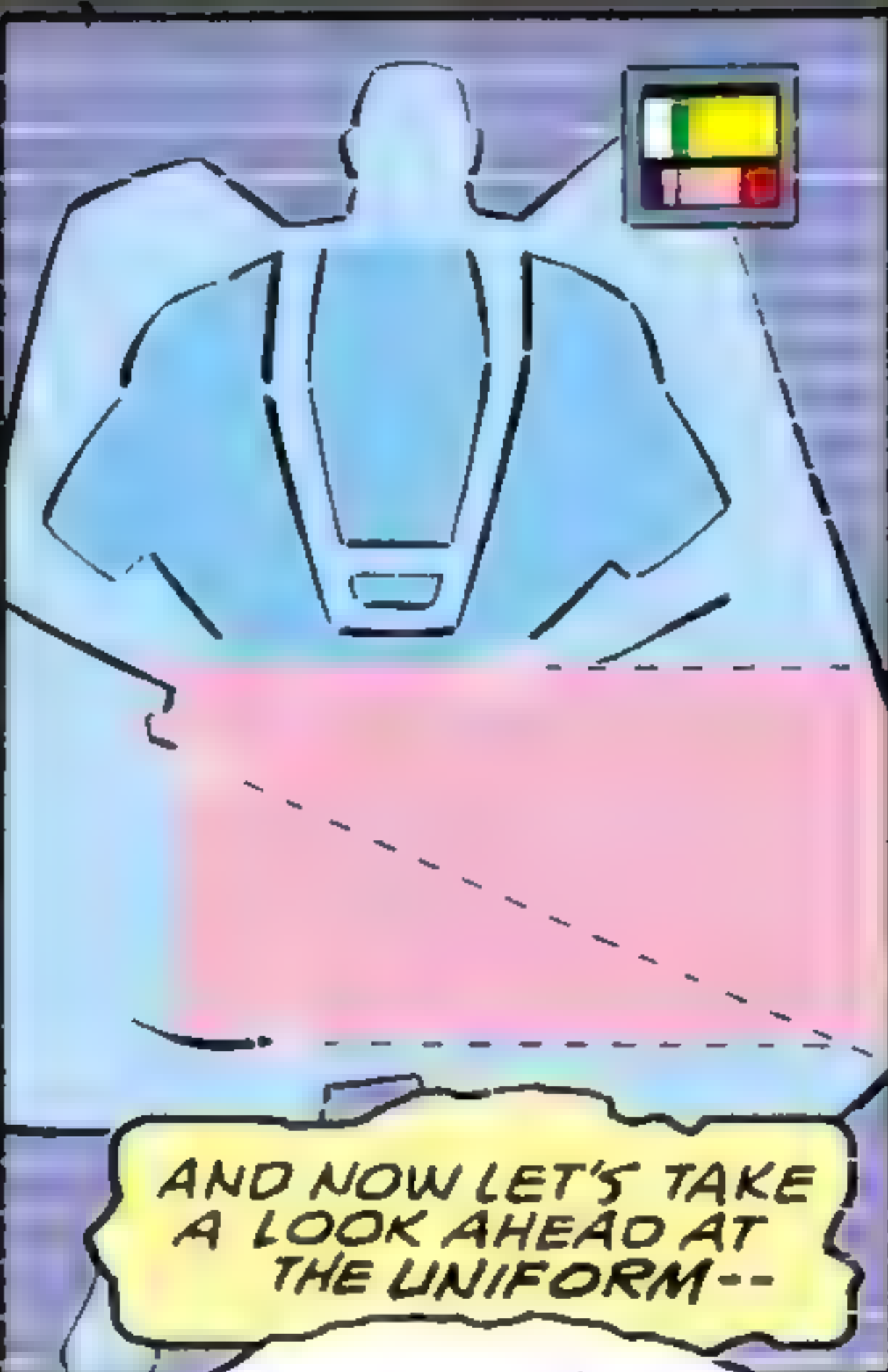


ENHANCED STRENGTH, MENTAL AND VISION POWERS, STAMINA...

THE LIST GOES ON AND ON.



TRULY, PROJECT CHAMPION IS THE GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT YET IN OUR EXCITING OPERATION EARTHSEED.



AND NOW LET'S TAKE A LOOK AHEAD AT THE UNIFORM--

ENOUGH! WHY AM I LISTENING TO THIS DISK-LICKING ROT!

SORRY, SIR...

AHEAD! AHEAD!

YES, SIR.

LET US SEE THIS MARRVEL IN THE FIELD.

...SUITABLE
CHALLENGE.

HIS NAME?
ATMOS.

A WORTHY OPPONENT
WHO WOULD SATISFY
OUR CURIOUSITY.
WOULD PROJECT
CHAMPION MEASURE
UP TO HIS ASSIGN-
MENT?

COULD HE SERVE
AS A GREAT
HERO TO THE
PEOPLE OF
EARTH?

A LEADER WHO
WOULD INSPIRE
A NEW AND
GREATER
LOYALTY TO
EARTHGOV...

AND HERR
DOMINION
ALLIES.

AS YOU CAN SEE,
OUR PROJECT
CHAMPION TEAM
DID ITS DESIGN
WORK WELL...

SETTLED ONLY FOR
THE TOP COMPONENTS...

YES, THIS OUTCOME
WAS NEVER
REALLY IN DOUBT...

NOT WHEN YOU CON-
SIDER THE ORIGINAL
TECHNO-INTELLIGENCE
MATRIX WAS EX-
TRACTED FROM THE
FAMOUS COMPUTO
UNIT...

POSSIBLY BRAINIAC
5'S GREATEST
CREATION EVER...

ETERNAL
ONE!...WE ARE
SAVED!

IF ANY FORCE
CAN RETRIEVE THE
SW6 BATCH...IT IS
PROJECT CHAMPION!

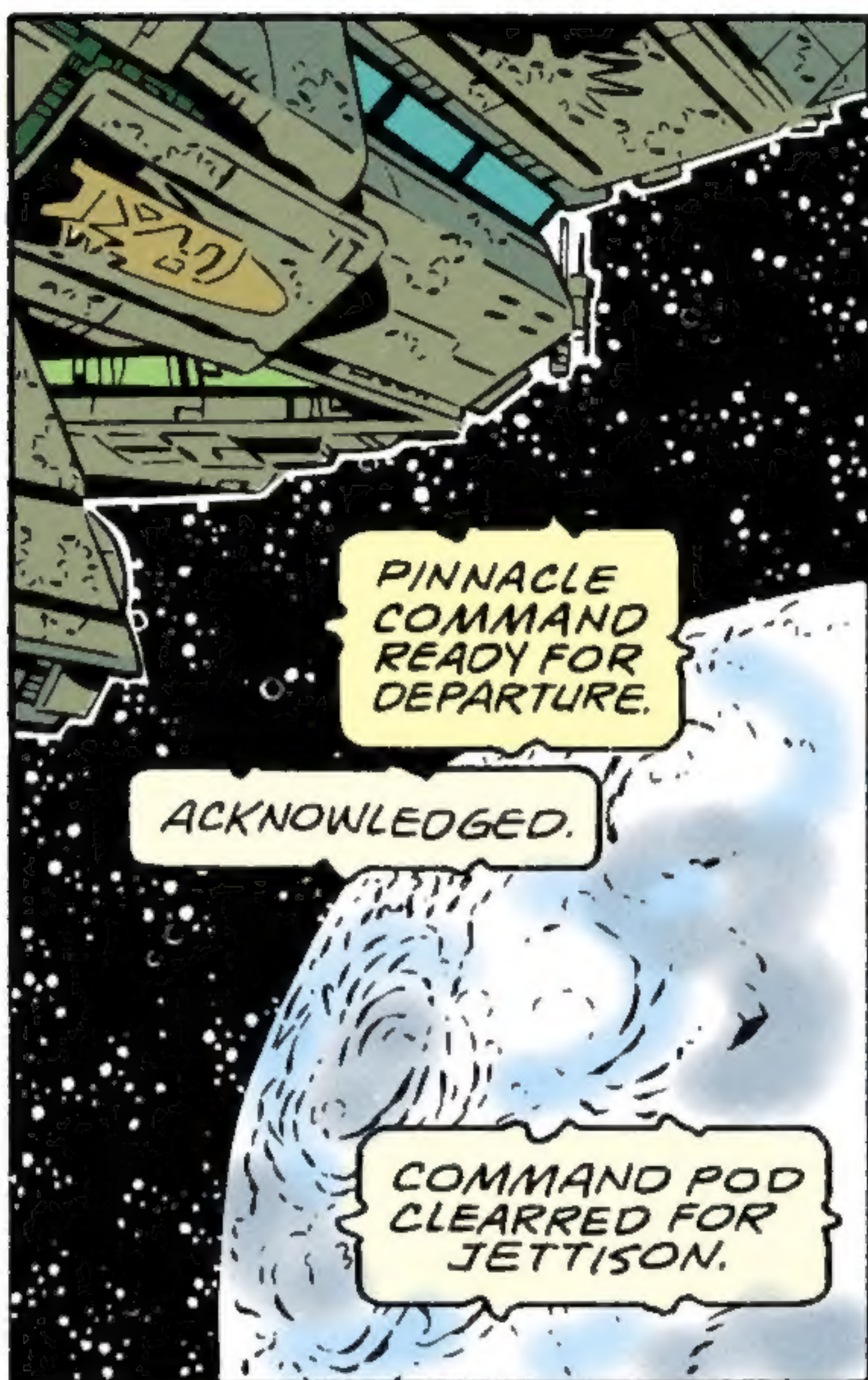
WE SHALL
DEPLOY
IMMEDIATELY!

YOU ARE IN
NO POSITION
TO DEPLOY
ANYTHING,
AMBASSADOR...

WH-
WHAT?! YOU
ARE
UNDER
ARREST.

BY THE
DIRECT
ORDER
OF PINNACLE
COMMAND.





PINNACLE
COMMAND
READY FOR
DEPARTURE.

ACKNOWLEDGED.

COMMAND POD
CLEARED FOR
JETTISON.



COMMENCING.

JETTISON
SEQUENCE
COMPLETE.



ACKNOWLEDGED, EHH,
FLAGSHIP PINNACLE,
WHAT IS THE GENERRAL'S
ESTIMATED TIME OF
ARRIVAL?

TWELVE MINUTES.
THAT'S TWELVE
MINUTES TO
TOUCHDOWN.



YES, GENERRAL,
THE HIGH AMBAS-
SADOR IS NOW
IN CUSTODY.

I KNOW THAT!
I'M ASKING
ABOUT THE
SENIORR
ATTACHE!

EH?



HE, AH, HE
APPEARRS TO
HAVE BEEN, AH,
MURDERRED.

MURDERRED?
BY WHOM? EH?



WE, AH, SUSPECT THIS
ONE, GENERRAL.
MADAME CIRRCCE...

CIRRCCE?! ONE
OF THEIR
OWN AGENTS?



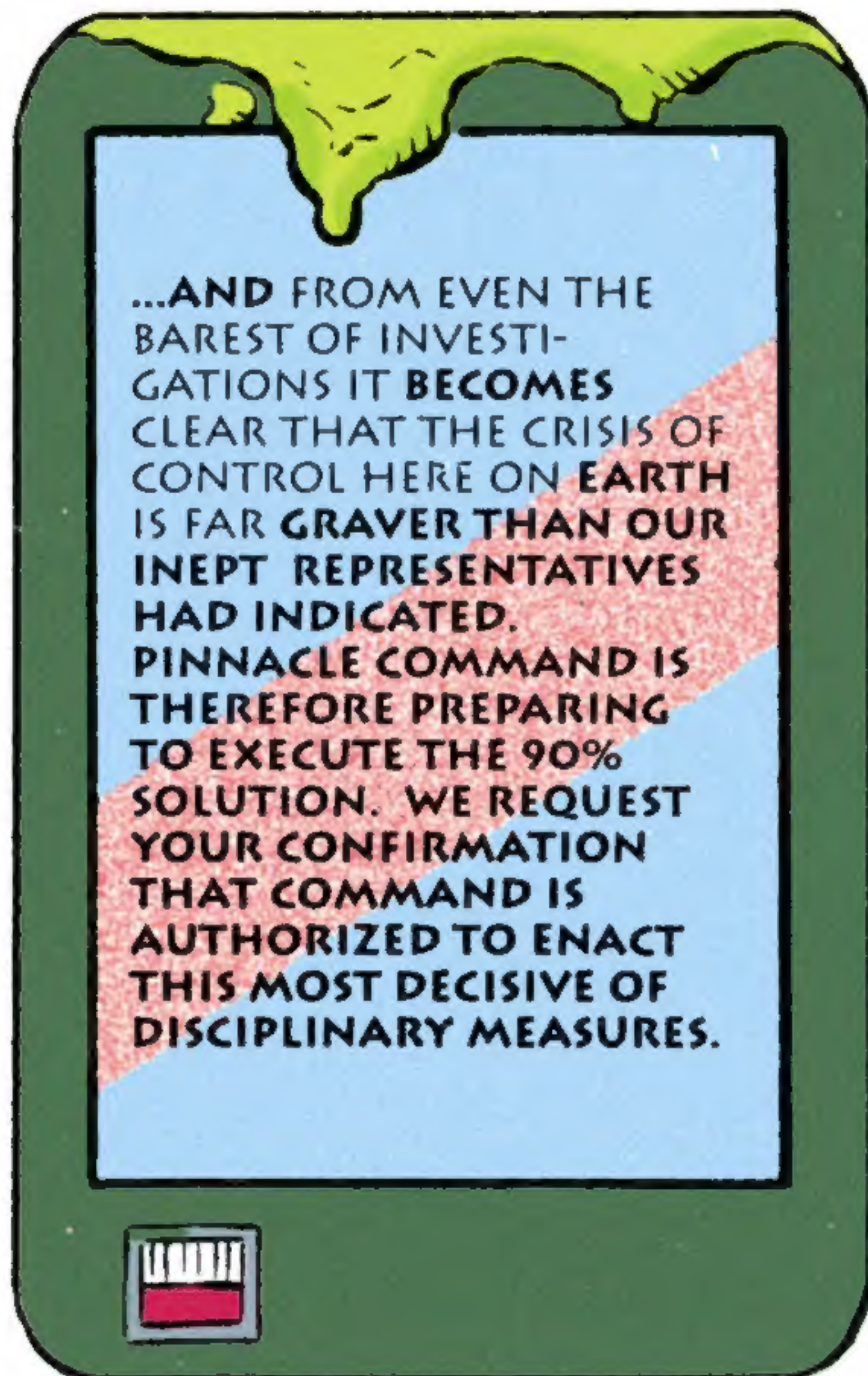
THE ASH-
HEADS!

THEY'VE MADE
A BIGGER MESS
OF THIS THAN
I'D EVERR
DRREAMED!



BLOODY
URINATION!
WE COULD ACTUALLY
LOSE THIS WHOLE
ROTTED
DUNGHEAP!

COMMUNICA-
TIONS! CONTACT
THE SUPREME
COUNCIL, TOP
PRIORITY...

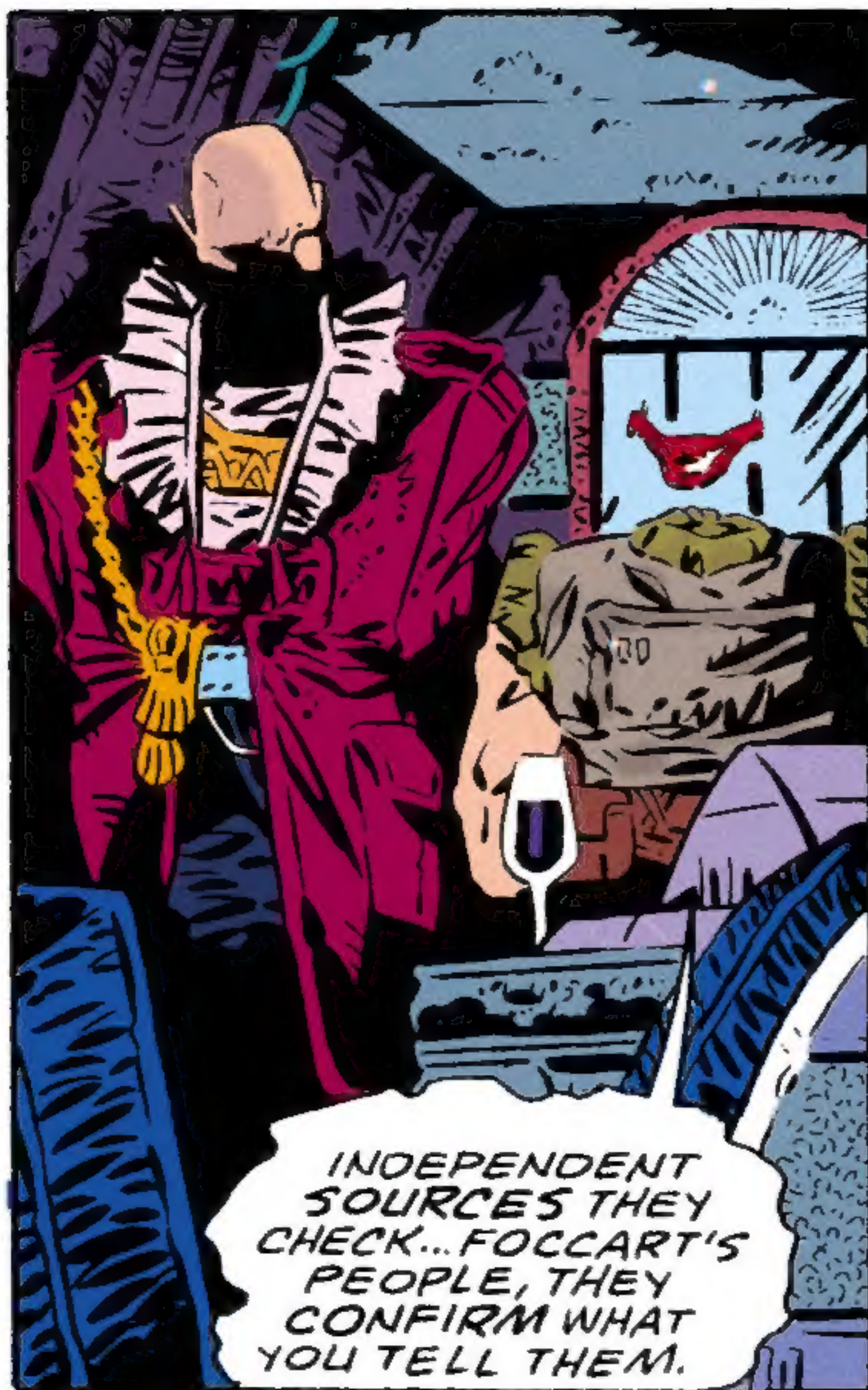


...AND FROM EVEN THE
BAREST OF INVESTI-
GATIONS IT BECOMES
CLEAR THAT THE CRISIS OF
CONTROL HERE ON EARTH
IS FAR GRAVER THAN OUR
INEPT REPRESENTATIVES
HAD INDICATED.
PINNACLE COMMAND IS
THEREFORE PREPARING
TO EXECUTE THE 90%
SOLUTION. WE REQUEST
YOUR CONFIRMATION
THAT COMMAND IS
AUTHORIZED TO ENACT
THIS MOST DECISIVE OF
DISCIPLINARY MEASURES.

THE NEW MEXICO DISTRICT...



YES, UNIVERSO, THEY NOW KNOW--IT IS THE TRUTH YOU TELL!



INDEPENDENT SOURCES THEY CHECK...FOCCART'S PEOPLE, THEY CONFIRM WHAT YOU TELL THEM.



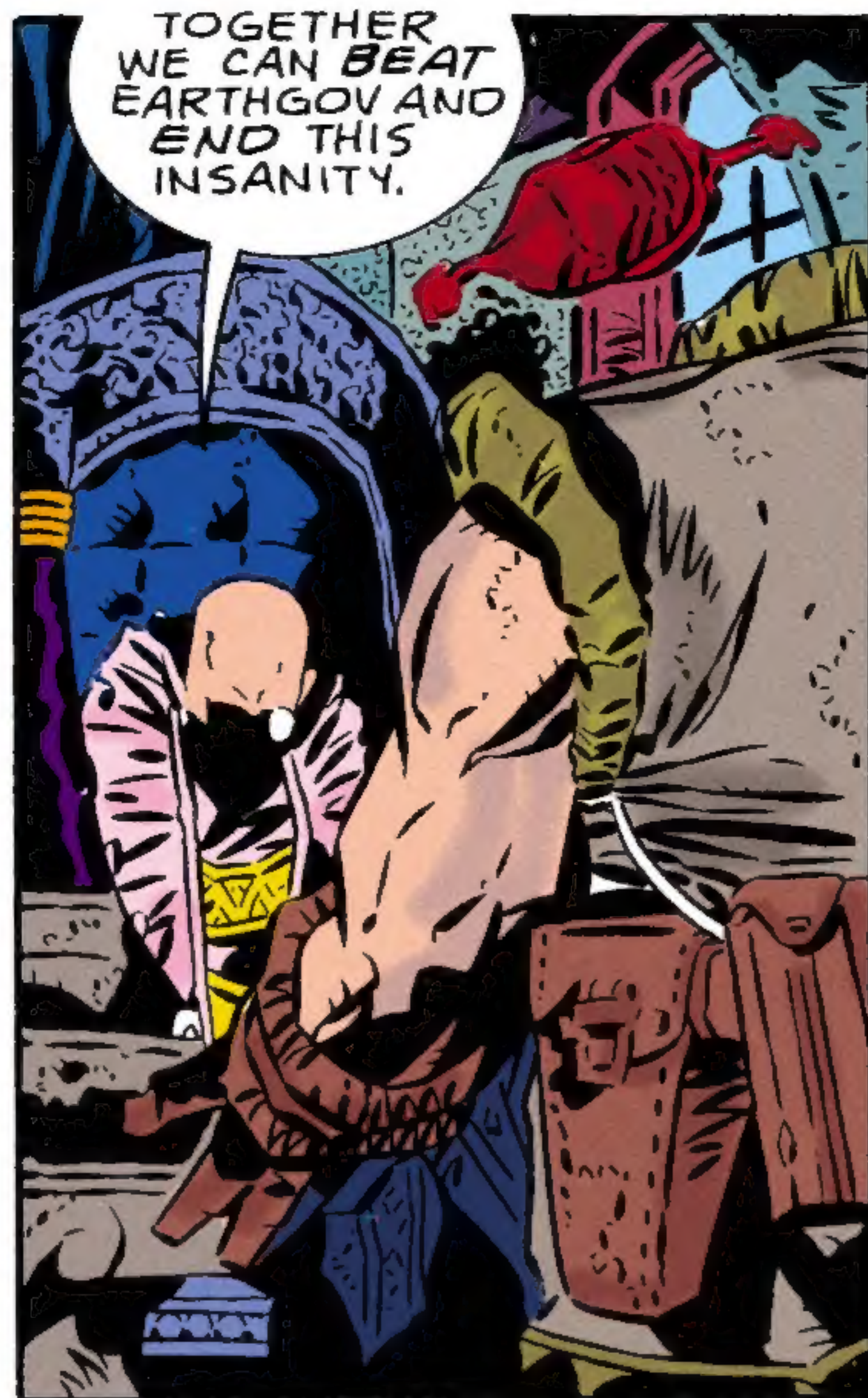
THE CHAMBERS--THEY KNOW NOW--ARE NOT YOUR FANTASY!

THERE IS NO LONGER ANY QUESTION--THEY NEED YOU!



VERY GOOD, GRINN, VERY GOOD.

WE WILL ACCOMPLISH MUCH TOGETHER, FOCCART AND I.



TOGETHER WE CAN BEAT EARTHOV AND END THIS INSANITY.



YES, UNIVERSO, YES, BUT WHAT THEN?!

TWO RULERS?! YOU AND FOCCART?! I THINK NOT!



WELL, MY FRIEND, THIS IS A DANGEROUS GAME WE PLAY.

IF I DO NOT SURVIVE IT, THEY WILL STILL HAVE FOCCART TO LEAD THEM.



AND IF FOCCART DOES NOT SURVIVE IT...

WELL...

TOM & MARY BIERBAUM
PLOT & DIALOGUE

KEITH GIFFEN
STORY ASSIST & PENCILS

AL GORDON
INKS

JOHN WORKMAN
LETTERER

TOM MCGRAW
COLORIST

DAN RASPLER
EDITOR



TO: ALL DOMINION REPRESENTATIVES ON EARTH,
ALL EARTHGOV OFFICIALS
FROM: PINNACLE COMMAND

MY PARTNERS IN THIS GREAT ENDEAVOR,

PINNACLE COMMAND HAS BEEN APPOINTED TO OVERSEE ALL DOMINION INTERESTS ON EARTH BY THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE RULING CASTE AND HAS IN TURN BEEN APPOINTED BY EARTHGOV PRESIDENT TAYLA WELLINGTON TO SUPERVISE ALL MATTERS OF PLANETARY SECURITY.

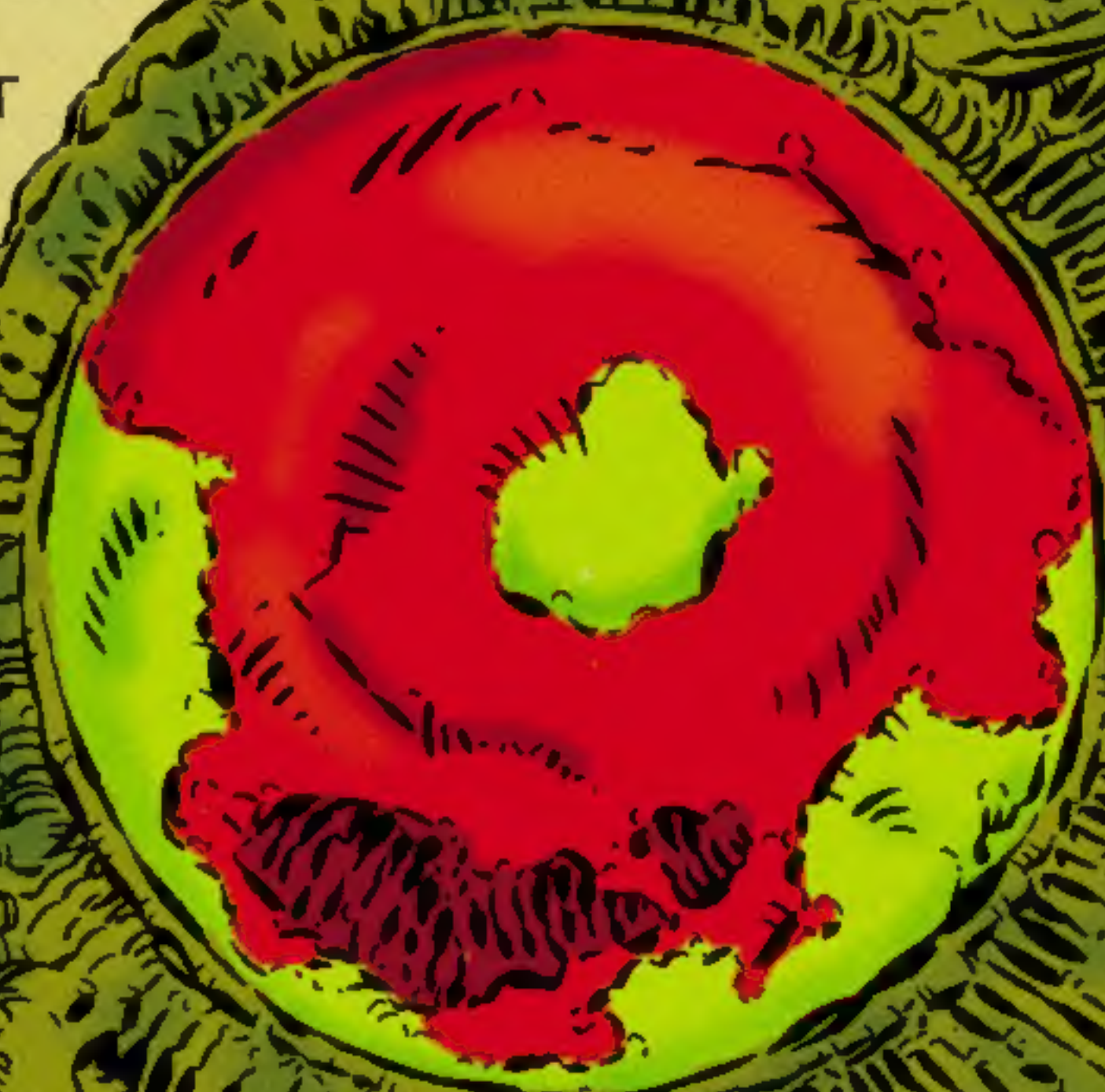
IT IS THEREFORE THE ORDER OF THIS COMMAND THAT ALL MARTIAL-LAW MEASURES BE EXTENDED FOR AN INDEFINITE PERIOD AND WHERE NECESSARY BE REINFORCED, SO THAT THESE POLICIES, RULES AND PROCEDURES WILL BE STRICTLY ADHERED TO UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE:

- THE ERADICATION OF INSURRECTION IS THE TOP PRIORITY OF THIS GOVERNMENT. THE GENEROUS PROGRAM OF REWARDS FOR INFORMATION PERTAINING TO ACTS OF SEDITION WILL BE ENHANCED, WHILE THE PENALTY FOR OFFERING ANY COMFORT OR ASSISTANCE TO THE RESISTANCE CONTINUES TO BE DEATH.
- THE SEARCH FOR ALL KNOWN INSURGENTS IS TO BE STEPPED UP. UPON CAPTURE, ALL ARE TO BE IMMEDIATELY EXECUTED.
- IT IS THE WISH OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL THAT ANY CONFRONTATION WITH THE UNITED PLANETS, THE KHUNDISH EMPIRE, THE REALM OF THE CIRCLE, OTHER INTERSTELLAR BODIES OR THEIR ALLIES BE DELAYED UNTIL THE COUNCIL'S OBJECTIVES ON THIS WORLD HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED.

THEREFORE, NO APPEARANCE SHALL BE GIVEN THAT EARTHGOV AFFAIRS ARE NOT BEING RUN SOLELY BY ITS ELECTED HUMAN OFFICIALS OR THAT THE DOMINION PRESENCE HERE COMPRISES ANYTHING MORE THAN THE GENEROUS ASSISTANCE OF ALLIES TO THOSE OFFICIALS.

THEREFORE, OVERT ENFORCEMENT OF THESE AND OTHER DIRECTIVES IS TO BE HANDLED BY THE S.P.E. EARTHGOV MILITIA AND OTHER HUMAN AGENCIES WHENEVER POSSIBLE. REVOLT WITHIN THESE HUMAN AGENCIES IS TO BE DEALT WITH SEVERELY AND DISCREETLY, ANY ACT OF DISLOYALTY IS PUNISHABLE BY DEATH.

- ALL EARTHGOV EXECUTIVES AND SUPERVISORS ARE TO REPORT DAILY TO THEIR DOMINION LIAISONS. SENIOR OFFICIALS WILL REPORT HOURLY. ALL COMMUNICATIONS WILL BE CONSTANTLY MONITORED.
 - NO TRANSMISSIONS TO EXTRATERRESTRIAL POINTS ARE ALLOWED WITHOUT FULL REVIEW AND APPROVAL. JAMMING OF ALL SIGNALS BESIDES AUTHORIZED EARTHGOV TRANSMISSIONS WILL CONTINUE. GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS REMAIN RESTRICTED AND MONITORED. UNAUTHORIZED TRANSMISSIONS ARE TO BE TRACED AND THOSE RESPONSIBLE EXECUTED.
 - NO ALIEN OBSERVERS, DIPLOMATS OR PRESS ARE PERMITTED ON EARTH. ANY PERSONNEL SO IDENTIFIED WILL BE IMMEDIATELY SEIZED, DEBRIEFED AND DEPORTED. COMPLETE DETAILS OF ALL SUCH INCIDENTS ARE TO BE PROVIDED TO THE APPROPRIATE DOMINION LIAISON.
 - MOVEMENT ABOUT THE PLANET IS TO REMAIN SEVERELY RESTRICTED, WITH NO NON-ESSENTIAL WORKERS PERMITTED TO PASS THROUGH ANY CHECKPOINT WITHOUT DOMINION-APPROVED AUTHORIZATION. THOSE ATTEMPTING TO CIRCUMVENT THESE RESTRICTIONS ARE TO BE EXECUTED IMMEDIATELY.
 - ALL MEDIA ARE TO BE STRICTLY CONTROLLED. NO PUBLICATION OR BROADCAST IS PERMITTED WITHOUT REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE DOMINION COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY. ANY VIOLATION OF THESE RESTRICTIONS IS PUNISHABLE BY DEATH.
 - DOMINION PERSONNEL AND DOMINION INSTALLATIONS ARE TO REMAIN ON TOP-PRIORITY STATUS IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF ALL EARTH RESOURCES. LOYAL ALLIES IN EARTHGOV, THE S.P.E., THE MILITIA AND THE E.C.C. MAINTAIN GRADE-TWO PRIORITY. STRICT RATIONING FOR ALL OTHER CLASSIFICATIONS IS TO CONTINUE. ALL SUPPLIES ARE TO BE CUT OFF TO AREAS KNOWN TO HOST BASES OF INSURGENCY. THE STARVATION OF NON-INSURGENT HUMANS WILL MOTIVATE THEM TO ASSIST OUR EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE THE INSURGENTS.
- ALL ARE SO ORDERED IN THE SERVICE OF THE HIGHEST CASTE. COMPLIANCE WILL BE AMPLY REWARDED, DISOBEDIENCE IS PUNISHABLE BY DEATH.



From Baaldur, with love...

GLORITH

